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## Religious Art: Reflectors of Change in the Catholic Church in New Mexico, 1830–1910.

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**RELIGIOUS ART:  
REFLECTORS OF CHANGE IN THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NEW MEXICO, 1830-1910**

**VOLUME I**

**A Dissertation**

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**in**

**The Department of History**

**by**

**Shirley Jean Sands**

**B.A., Emporia State University, 1972**

**M.S., Emporia State University, 1974**

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## **To My Parents**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### VOLUME I

Dedication .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iii
List of Figures .....	vi
Abstract .....	xiii
Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1 Early Spanish and Mexican Religious Art and Traditions .....	19
Chapter 2 Mexican Religious Art and Traditions .....	51
Chapter 3 Santa Fe de San Francisco .....	125
Nineteenth Century French Religious Art .....	134

### VOLUME II

Chapter 4 Santa Cruz de la Cañada .....	181
Chapter 5 <i>Santuario de Chimayó</i> .....	228
Santo Nino de Atocha .....	236
Art of <i>Santuario de Chimayó</i> .....	239
Chapter 6 Abiquiú .....	263
Abiquiú's History .....	264
Religious Art of the Abiquiú Moradas .....	269
Chapter 7 Conclusions .....	329
Chapter 8 Epilogue .....	337

Selected Bibliography .....	355
Appendix I Santa Cruz de la Cañada .....	387
Appendix II Abiquiú .....	396
Vita .....	400

## LIST OF FIGURES

M.1	New Mexico, 1800 .....	7
1.1	<u>The Nativity</u> by Juan de Flanders .....	28
1.2	<u>Santa Lucia</u> by Francisco de Zurbarán .....	29
1.3	<u>Pieta</u> by Gregorio Fernández .....	41
2.1	Our Lady of Light, original oil painting .....	74
2.2	Our Lady of Light, Mexican copy .....	74
2.3	Our Lady of Light, woodcut .....	75
2.4	Our Lady of Light, carved stone relief .....	75
2.5	<i>Reredos of La Castrense</i> with stone relief of Our Lady of Light .....	76
2.6	<i>Reredos of La Castrense</i> with Our Lady of Light replaced by <i>bulto</i> . .....	77
2.7	Altarscreen: Our Lady of Talpa Chapel .....	99
2.8	Christ crucified known as <i>La Misracordia</i> by Rafael Aragón .....	100
2.9	Christ crucified by unknown santero .....	101
2.10	Our Lady of Solitude .....	109
2.11	Christ in the Holy Sepulchre .....	117
2.12	Casket .....	117

2.13	Our Lady of Talpa . . . . .	119
2.14	Our Lady of the Rosary . . . . .	120
2.15	<i>El Santo Niño</i> (The Holy Child) . . . . .	121
2.16	Our Lady of Talpa Chapel displaying the art as reconstructed at the Taylor Museum . . . . .	123
3.1	<i>La Vierge a l'hostie</i> by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres . . . . .	138
3.2	Engraving of <i>La Sainte Vierge</i> . . . . .	143
3.3	Engraving of <i>La Sainte Vierge</i> . . . . .	144
3.4	<i>Replique of Saint Monica and Saint Augustine</i> by Ary Scheffer . . . .	146
3.5	<i>Christ Weeping Over Jerusalem</i> by Ary Scheffer . . . . .	147
3.6	<i>The Last Supper</i> by Hippolyte Flandrin . . . . .	148
3.7	<i>Christ Giving Keys to St. Peter</i> by Hippolyte Flandrin . . . . .	149
3.8	Engraving from <i>Entrance into Jerusalem</i> by Flandrin . . . . .	150
3.9	<i>L'Ami des humbles</i> by Leon Lhermitte . . . . .	151
3.10	Statuary available in 1877 . . . . .	152
3.11	Statuary available for purchase 1877 . . . . .	153
3.12	Statuary for purchase 1895 . . . . .	154
3.13	The <i>Parroquia</i> in 1846 after sketch by Lt. J.W. Abert . . . . .	159
3.14	Partially remodeled and wholly crenelated, the <i>Parroquia</i> around 1867 . . . . .	160
3.15	Archbishop Jean Baptist Lamy and originally planned St. Francis Cathedral . . . . .	161
3.16	St. Francis Cathedral, Santa Fe, New Mexico ca 1888 . . . . .	162

3.17	Facade of the Our Lady of Light (Loretto Chapel). . . . .	166
3.18	Pilaster Capitals of the Loretto Chapel . . . . .	167
3.19	Stained glassed windows of St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Stanislaus in the Loretto Chapel . . . . .	169
3.20	Stained glass windows of the Evangelists in Loretto Chapel . . . . .	170
3.21	The Rose window and stained glass of Alpha and Omega . . . . .	172
3.22	Altar of the Chapel ca 1895 . . . . .	173
3.23	Gothic designed altar in Loretto Chapel . . . . .	174
3.24	Statues of Virgin Mary and St. Joseph with Christ Child . . . . .	175
3.25	Santa Fe, New Mexico ca 1882. . . . .	180
4.1	<i>Santo Entierro</i> by Fray Andrés García . . . . .	185
4.2	Casket and <i>bultos</i> in Santa Cruz de la Cañada church, 1911. . . . .	190
4.3	Altar in church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. . . . .	196
4.4	Altar Screen by Rafael Aragón for Santa Cruz . . . . .	197
4.5	South Chapel . . . . .	201
4.6	Interior of Santa Cruz ca 1915. . . . .	202
4.7	Santa Cruz church, simplified plan . . . . .	205
4.8	Holy Trinity, detail from altar screen in South Chapel . . . . .	209
4.9	Detail of <i>bulto</i> of St. Francis in the altar of the South Chapel . . . . .	212
4.10	Interior of Santa Cruz ca 1881. . . . .	215
4.11	Our Lady of Carmel, Our Lady of Carmel by Rafael Aragón. . . . .	218



4.12	Interior of church at Santa Cruz ca 1940 .....	219
4.13	Interior of Santa Cruz after restoration in 1983 .....	220
4.14	Exterior of Santa Cruz de la Cañada ca 1872 .....	222
4.15	Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1881 .....	223
4.16	Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1897 .....	224
4.17	Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1930 .....	225
5.1	Our Lord of Esquímulas by Molleno .....	233
5.2	Floor plan of <i>Santuario</i> .....	248
5.3	Interior of the <i>Santuario de Chimayó</i> ca 1946-53 .....	249
5.4	Rough sketches of the A and B <i>reredos</i> found in the <i>Santuario</i> .....	250
5.5	Main <i>reredos</i> behind the altar .....	251
5.6	Rough Sketches of <i>reredos</i> D and E produced by Molleno and Miguel Aragon .....	252
5.7	Interior of <i>Santuario</i> in 1911 .....	254
5.8	Interior of <i>Santuario</i> in 1935 .....	255
5.9	Procession at <i>Santuario</i> in 1910 .....	260
5.10	Exterior of <i>Santuario</i> in 1935 .....	261
6.1	Chromolithographs in tin frames .....	274
6.2	Holy Child of Atocha in tin niche .....	275
6.3	Paso Figure of Death, Confraternity of the Entombed Christ, Seville .....	277

6.4	Death Cart for Good Friday Procession, Mexico City .....	278
6.5	Death Cart in Sangre de Cristo style .....	280
6.6	Detail of Death Cart .....	281
6.7	Details of Death Cart .....	282
6.8	Death ( <i>La Muerta</i> ) as found in the East <i>morada</i> .....	286
6.9	Interior of the East <i>morada</i> .....	287
6.10	Crucified Christ with angel .....	288
6.11	Crucifix by "Master of Penitente Cristos." .....	291
6.12	Detail of face of Crucifix .....	292
6.13	<i>Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno</i> (Our Father Jesus the Nazarene) by Rafael Aragón .....	293
6.14	Our Lady of Sorrows .....	296
6.15	Our Lady of Sorrows, second half of nineteenth century .....	297
6.16	St. Peter and cock <i>bulto</i> .....	300
6.17	St. John the Evangelist .....	301
6.18	St. Anthony of Padua and the Christ Child .....	303
6.19	St. John Nepomuk .....	304
6.20	Interior of the South <i>morada</i> .....	306
6.21	St. Joseph and Christ child, chromolithograph .....	307
6.22	St. Francis of Assisi .....	309
6.23	Immaculate Conception .....	310
6.24	Our Lady of Sorrows, third quarter of nineteenth century .....	311

6.25	Virgin with Christ child or Santa Rosa de Lima .....	312
6.26	Christ with angel, early twentieth century .....	313
6.27	<i>Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno</i> (Ecce Homo).....	317
6.28	St. John of Nepomuk .....	318
6.29	Death ( <i>La Muerta</i> ) .....	319
6.30	Floor plans for the south and east <i>moradas</i> .....	321
6.31	Floor plans of <i>moradas</i> compared with New Mexican churches with contracted sanctuaries.....	322
6.32	Exterior of the South <i>morada</i> constructed ca 1900 .....	324
6.33	Exterior of East <i>morada</i> constructed middle nineteenth century.....	325
I.1	<i>Santo Entierro</i> after restoration .....	387
I.2	South Chapel ca 1872 .....	388
I.3	South Chapel altar, 1911 .....	389
I.4	Two top paintings in Fray Garcia's altar Screen.....	390
I.5	Bottom two paintings in Fray Garcia's altar screen.....	391
I.6	Lower right paintings in Fray Garcia's altar screen .....	392
I.7	Two paintings found on either side of altar .....	393
I.8	Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1908 .....	394
I.9	Exterior of the church at Santa Cruz, 1918 .....	395
II.1	Crucifix, second half of nineteenth century .....	396
II.2	Crucifix, second half of nineteenth century .....	397

II.3	Crucifix, second half of nineteenth century . . . . .	398
II.4	Tin niche with print of Christ child . . . . .	399

## ABSTRACT

In 1846, the United States of America began a war with the Republic of Mexico. When it was over, one of the results was the acquisition of much of current California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, southern Colorado and New Mexico. The region was occupied by Catholic Mexicans, a fact not lost on the American Catholic hierarchy. The result is the sending of a new religious administration and the founding of what would become the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The clergy sent were French with French notions of civilization, culture, and proper Catholic theology. These views and notions were contrary to those held by the Spanish-speaking population of the region and a struggle began.

By using the religious art of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, and secondarily the architecture, found in several sacred sites, in a number of different locations, the depth of French clerical influence is measured from the years 1830 through 1910. The iconography of the subjects is examined as well as the forms of the art, where they are placed, and the history of each in the French or Spanish traditions. Through the use of inventories and written records kept by the Spanish and Mexican priests and the post-American conquest records of photographs, and studies by anthropologists, art historians, folklorists, and historians change can be traced.

Not surprisingly, Santa Fe, the political, economic and ecclesiastical center of the new archdiocese reflected the maximum amount of change in the religious art and architecture in the Catholic church while the sites located in the rest of the study reflect less and less influence the farther from the center of power they are with the moradas of the Penitential brotherhoods showing no influence at all.

## INTRODUCTION

Today, if you walk into the church of San Felipe Neri in Old Town, Albuquerque, New Mexico; in the front of the church, to the right of the altar, you will see two statues of Jesus. The first, stands on a pedestal. It is a three-quarter life size, Saint-Sulpice Sacred Heart of Jesus. Painted in bright colors, Jesus looks down upon the viewer with quiet compassion. Below this statue in a glass case, is a carved three-quarter size, *Cristo Entierro* (the entombed Christ). Hand carved, finished with gesso and painted with tempera, this statue represents the Passion of Christ, His crucifixion and burial. Each of these statues represents part of the religious culture that makes up the Catholic Church in New Mexico today. Both traditions, now living in an odd sort of union on the same wall filling the same space, came to New Mexico in different ways. These dual traditions resulted from the Mexican War (1846-1848) between the Republic of Mexico and the United States. When it was over, the United States acquired much of current California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, southern Colorado, and New Mexico. In doing so, the United States gained territory predominately occupied by Roman Catholic Mexicans. Most of the Americans who came to New Mexico during the nineteenth century were Anglo-Protestants. The New

Mexicans inherited from their forefathers the images of Spanish Catholics as bigoted, cruel, lazy and fanatical. With intermarriage between the Spanish-speakers and the Indians, the Anglos also saw the New Mexicans as racially impure. Seeing the region as politically, economically, and culturally backward, the Americans felt justified in their prejudices.

Lewis Garrard writing during the Mexican War, describes Mexican males as "servile" and "villainous" and explained this was the result of the "extreme degradation" that the men had sunk to as a result of the retribution brought upon them as the "destroyers of [the] Aztec Empire." Albert Pike writing in 1831 found the New Mexicans "A lazy gossiping people, always lounging. . .living on nothing and without labor."<sup>1</sup>

Yet it is in the area of religion that American prejudices blooms into open contempt. In 1843, Josiah Gregg noted that "it is part of the superstitious blindness of these people to believe that everyone of their legion of canonized saints possessed the powers of performing certain miracles and their aid is generally invoked on all occasions of sickness and distress." Commenting upon the gullibility of the Catholic believers, Gregg notes, "the efficacy of these

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<sup>1</sup>Lewis H. Garrard, Wah-To-Yah and the Taos Trail (Palo Alto, CA, 1968), p. 194; ALbert Pike, Prose Sketches and Poems Written in the Western Country (With Additional Stories) ed. David J. Weber (Albuquerque, NM, 1967), p. 247 as quoted in David J. Weber Myths and the History of the Hispanic Southwest, p. 161.



superstitious remedies will not be difficult to account for, when the powerful influence of the imagination upon disease is taken into consideration."<sup>2</sup>

W. W. Davis, writing in 1857 commented upon the religious art, particularly the Virgin Mary; "The Virgin of Guadalupe, who heads the list [of important images] appears to be the key-stone of the whole system of worship in Mexico. He continues, "it appears quite incomprehensible how an intelligent person, in the middle of the nineteenth century, can believe in any such nonsense as the pretended appearance of Guadalupe and yet we find the whole corp of the priesthood. . .encouraging the people bow down and worship this graven image instead of their Maker."<sup>3</sup> For Anglo-Protestants if Americanization was going to be attempted, it would have to include religious conversion.

American Catholics, however, attempted to Americanize the Mexicans while maintaining their Catholicism. Americanization did not mean conversion, but rather transforming Hispanic Catholicism into American Catholicism. Quickly the American Catholic church petitioned Rome for the responsibility of the region and the right to administer it. Once granted, the American Catholic church lost no time in responding, but due to a lack of native born clergy, turned to France to fill the gap. The church assigned of two French clerics already in the United

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<sup>2</sup>Josiah Gregg, Commerce on the Prairie Edited by Max L. Moorhead (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p.117.

<sup>3</sup>W. W. Davis, El Gringo: Or New Mexico and Her People (New York: n.p., 1857; reprinted. Chicago, IL: The Rio Grande Press, Inc., 1962), pp. 122-23.

States to the new territory. With the arrival in Santa Fe of Jean Baptiste Lamy and Joseph Machebeuf in 1851, the French influence in the region began. By 1910, with the end of financial support for the territory by the French Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the five Archbishops and over two-thirds of all clergy originated in France, but despite the numerical dominance of French clergy, the persistence of Hispanic Catholicism can be seen in the religious practices and religious art of New Mexican Catholics.

With a population almost entirely illiterate it would be hard to use diaries and other written sources to judge change. The literacy of an individual would automatically place him/her in a unique position in his/her community and not necessarily representative of the whole. Yet, by examining the religious art and to a lesser extent in the architecture found in religious sights in New Mexico, the influence of French Catholicism, of lack thereof, can be seen.

From the earliest of times, the Catholic Church has used religious art to spread its beliefs and traditions. Sixteenth-century Spanish religious traditions, Confraternities, Third Orders, the procession of Holy Week and the art utilized in these processions originated in Spain, came to New Spain (colonial Mexico) and finally New Mexico with the early settlers and priests. Built at the end of the eighteenth century, the military chapel (*La Castrense*) in Santa Fe built at the end of the eighteenth century and the private chapel of Our Lady of Talpa built in 1837, illustrate the development of a unique religious tradition in New Mexico,

the result of Franciscan teachings, geographic isolation and the regions' gradual abandonment by the Catholic Church in Mexico. The *reredos* [altar screen] in *La Castrense* became the archetype for altar screens throughout New Mexico. Our Lady of Talpa chapel, while a private family chapel, was dedicated to the use of the local penitential Brotherhood, with the iconography reflecting this dedication in its representations of St. Francis of Assisi, Jesus the Nazarene and the advocations of Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Solitude. Other medieval Spanish religious motifs are seen in the representations of the Trinity as three indetical men with the attributes of Father, Son and Spirit. The Immaculate Conception, long a devotion of the Franciscans was represented, not only at Talpa, but virtually all other churches, chapels and *moradas* (penitential chapels). These two examples artistically illuminate New Mexico's religious culture just before American conquest. The hand-carved, gessoed, and painted *bultos* (statues) and *retablos* (flat board paintings) were the religious art found in Spanish Catholic churches of early nineteenth-century New Mexico. Through the use of inventories and written records kept by the Spanish and Mexican priests and the post-American conquest records of photographs, studies by anthropologists, art historians, archaeologists, and folklorists, specific sites lend themselves to tracing the changes in the art and secondarily the architecture of the Catholic Church in New Mexico.

Santa Fe de San Francisco, as the political, economic and ecclesiastical center, showed the earliest and greatest signs of change (Figure M.1). French impressions of the architecture are seen in the very first comments and reports of the French clergy. Lamy, in his 1856 report to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith stated: "The entire Mexican population is Catholic, but generally very poor . . . . Our best houses and churches are nothing but great mud huts [adobe]. We know no other architecture here."<sup>4</sup> Change came quickly in Santa Fe. Nineteenth-century and particularly French artistic influences manifested themselves in the architecture of Lamy's new cathedral built to replace the older adobe Spanish *Parroquia*. Even before the Bishop was able to build his Cathedral, changes were made to the facade of the *Parroquia* (parish church) in Santa Fe. The three-tiered towers of the Mexican period were shortened into pointed brick towers with battlements. Slowly Bishop Lamy instituted renovations. As the second Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, Archbishop Salpointe, pointed out in his memoir, Soldier of the Cross, the parishioners' were "limited [in] knowledge of proportions, and [displayed] less taste in their work," therefore it was necessary for the priest of each parish, "to make his plans and superintend the work from the beginning to end, as much as

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<sup>4</sup>Lamy Annual report to the Société de la Propagation de la Foi, 1856, Record no. 3456, Jammes Project. translated from the French by Nancy Hanks, "Not of this Earth, " p.161.

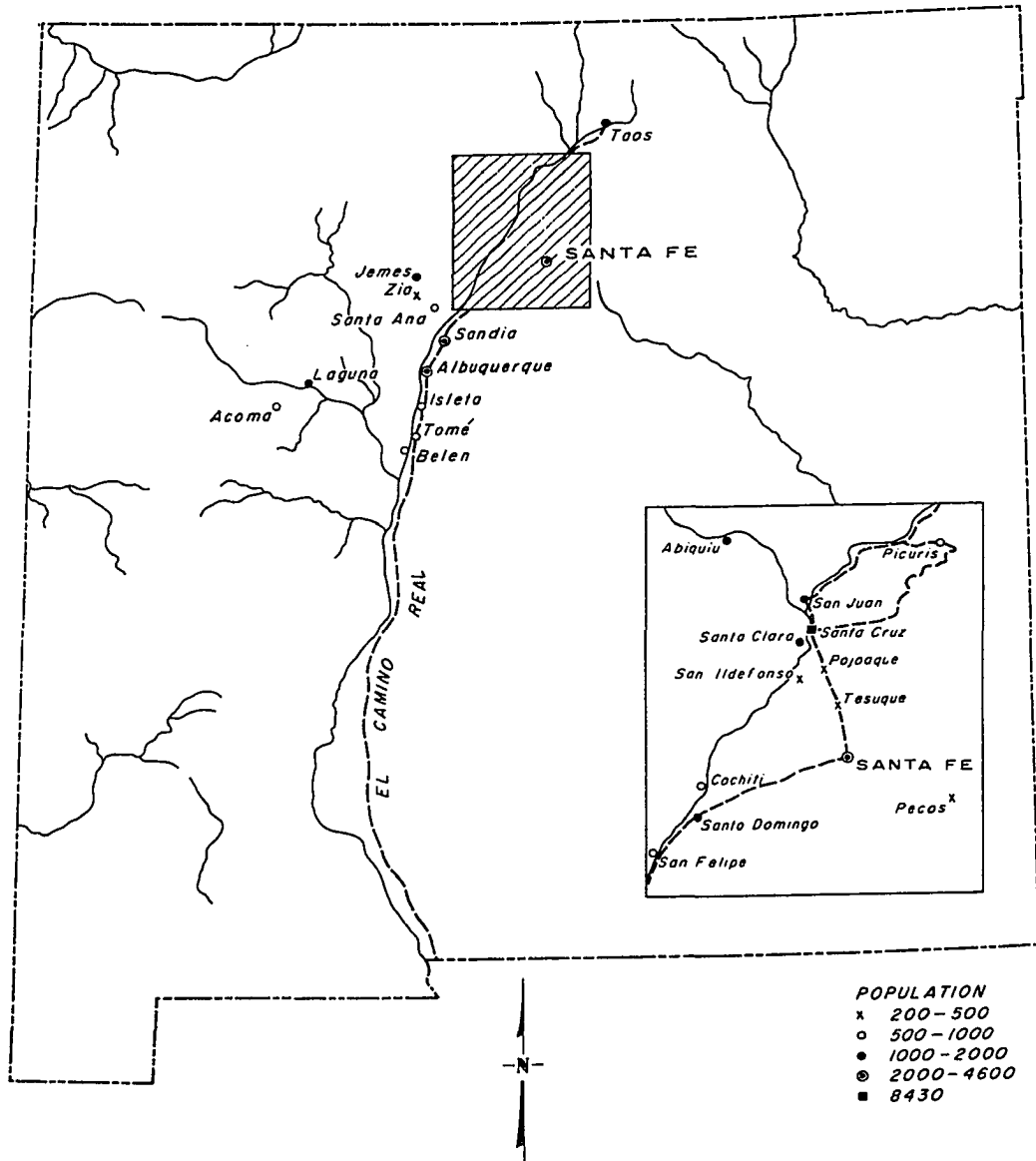


Figure M.1 New Mexico, 1800. In Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Haase  
Historical Atlas of New Mexico ( Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma  
 Press, 1969), p. 20.

possible, in order to prevent the mistakes of his mechanics."<sup>5</sup> In fact, the parishioners knew how to build a church. The problem was in taste and design with the new clergy who insisted upon designs to their own tastes, therefore finding it "necessary" to "superintend" the projects.

Other architectural changes reflected the nineteenth-century French desire to introduce their tastes in church design to the people of New Mexico. Almost immediately pointed windows, spires, and gabled roofs were added to the basic adobe structure of a church as repair was needed. The Our Lady of Light Chapel built for the Loretto sisters, which quickly became known as the Loretto Chapel, followed the lead of the Cathedral. The Cathedral was designed along Midi-Romanesque lines. The Loretto Chapel following lighter lines of Gothic design with pointed windows, arches and the obligatory rose window was, as John Bourke noted in 1881, "far different from the damp dark mouldy recesses of San Francisco, San Miguel or Guadalupe [chapels]."<sup>6</sup> The architects, windows, and statues for the Loretto Chapel all came from France, with only the financing of the chapel coming from the Spanish-speaking New Mexicans.

A great contrast is found forty miles north of Santa Fe in another old town, Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Founded in 1695, it was the center of all civil and church activities in the Rio Arriba (Upper) section of New Mexico. Santa

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<sup>5</sup>Salpointe, Soldier of the Corss, p. 236.

<sup>6</sup>Bourke, "Bourke on the Southwest VII, " p. 318.

Cruz was an important center for trade and it was the center for *santero* (saint producing artists) activities. Lamy placed the first French clergyman there in 1869 and with few brief exceptions, French clergy served there until 1920 when a Spanish congregation (from Spain) called the Sons of the Holy Family came to administer the parish. The church at Santa Cruz was built in 1733 and since it was a church center, there are many inventories and records of the art created for this parish church in the Archdiocese records. The importance of the church also afforded it the ability to commission the best artists to render pieces for the church and surrounding chapels. The beauty of the church and its great size attracted a number of American photographers, while its age, number of paintings, sculpture, and screens attracted art historians and restorers. Santa Cruz de la Cañada has all of the resources available to construct a religious art history of this site. The evidence indicates there was no French influence in the subject matter or the style of the art found inside of the church. The side chapels dedicated to St. Francis of Assisi and Our Lady of Carmel remained intact since their construction. The altar screen painted by Father Andrés García around 1766 was added to by *santero* artist Rafael Aragón in the mid 1850s, and was left unaltered until the late 1940s. The side altar screens and *bultos* were left untouched.

In the nineteenth century only the architectural designs of the church indicate any French influence. From 1872 onward there were attempts to

transform the exterior of the church. Open, tent-shaped merlons were added on top of both sides of the chapel. Ornamental arches grace either side of the pediments. Round stacks of adobes were placed on top of a high wall surrounding the entrance court and cemetery of the church. By 1881, photographs show few remnants of this attempt to change the look of the church at Santa Cruz. The unique properties of adobe construction were not understood by the French clergy and their efforts at improvement were transitory. More successful were the attempts in the 1890s to pitch the flat roof, add shingles and then in the 1930s to add a multi-leveled peaked tin roof. Fortunately, this church was structurally strong enough to survive the roof changes. Records indicate that many smaller structures collapsed under the new stresses placed upon the adobe walls.

Within Catholicism there are a number of types of worship sites. Besides Cathedrals and parish churches there are private chapels. The *Santuario de Chimayó* located in El Potrero was built as a private chapel by the Abeyta family but was open to the public for community and private worship. Built on a site valued for its healing dirt, the *Santuario* quickly became a pilgrimage site. As such, early church records record the request to build the chapel and have it blessed, as well as documenting miraculous happenings at the site. Legends of miraculous crucifixes abound. The site, studied by anthropologists, archaeologists, art historians and folklorists, and photographed by Americans



during the nineteenth century, allows the historian to look with some assurance of accuracy at the art found at the site and look for the influence of the French clergy.<sup>7</sup>

Sometime around the turn of the century, perhaps a little earlier, the owners of the *Santuario* placed chromolithographs of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the walls on either side of the main altar screen which was produced by Antonio Molleno in the 1830s. These chromolithographs were never mentioned in the studies of the art found but can be seen in the photographs taken of the chapel. The Sacred Heart was a dominant devotion found in the Catholic church of the nineteenth century, particularly in the French church. The devotion of the Sacred Heart is based on the teaching that the "human heart of Christ is, in a strict sense, adorable and this because it belongs to the divine Person who is the Incarnate Word. To this Heart is given spontaneous devotion. . .because it is a symbol of the redemptive

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<sup>7</sup>Stepehn F. deBorhegi, "The Miraclulous Shrine of Our Lord of Esquipulas in Guatemala and Chimayó, New Mexico," *El Palacio* 60( March, 1953): 83-111; reprint ed. *El Santuario de Chimayó* (Santa Fe: The Spanish Colonial Arts Society, Inc., 1956), pp. 11-12; George Kubler, *The Religious Architecture of New Mexico in the Colonial Period and Since American Occupation* (Colorado Springs, CO: Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1940; reprint ed. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press), 1973); L. Bradford Prince, *Spanish Mission Church of New Mexico* (Cedar Rapids, IA: The orch Press, 1915); Benjamin Reed, "El Santuario de Chimayó," *El Palacio* 3 #4 (August 1916): 81-84; Edith Turner and Victor Turner, *Images and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); E. Boyd, *Saints and Saint Makers of New Mexico* (Santa Fe: Laboratory of Anthropology, 1946); E. Boyd, *Popular Arts of New Mexico* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1974).

love of the redeemer for all men." Not only is it a symbol however, the Church has been "most definite in making it clear that it honors the actual Heart of Christ in its corporeal or fleshy state."<sup>8</sup>

The devotion itself presents a portrait of Jesus that is very different from the Christ of the Passion and traditional Spanish culture. The acceptance of this devotion points to an acceptance of a new idea not found in the other examples. This contradicts the sometimes argued view that the country folk in the hills of New Mexico were a completely closed society and would not accept any idea from without. But, the rest of the art in the *Santuario* does pre-date French influence. Altar screens located in the *Santuario* and noted by deBorhegyi, in his exhaustive study of miraculous shrines of Our Lord Esquípuas in both Guatamala and Chimayó, New Mexico, were painted by Antonio Molleno, José Aragón and Miguel Aragón and were completed by 1850.<sup>9</sup>

In the case of the *Santuario de Chimayó*, the French clergy from Santa Cruz, who served as the priests for this small community were able to convince the residents of the value of accepting the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sacred

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<sup>8</sup>Arthur R. McGratty, S.J., The Sacred Heart: Yesterday and Today (New York: Benzinger Brothers, Inc., 1951), pp. 2-3.

<sup>9</sup>Boyd, Saints and Saint Makers; deBorhegyi, El Santurio; Larry Frank, Kingdon of the Saints: Religious Art of New Mexico, 1780-1907 (Santa Fe: Red Crane Books, 1992); Boyd, Popular Art of New Mexico; Donna Pierce, "The Holy Trinity on the Art of Rafael Aragón, An Iconographical Study," New Mexico Studies in the Fine Arts Vol III (1978): 29-33.

(Immaculate) Heart of Mary. The residents did not, however, replace their traditional symbols, rather they added to them.

At the other end of the continuum from the strong French influence found in Santa Fe are the *moradas* at Abiquiú, New Mexico. These chapels are owned by the penitential brotherhoods founded in New Mexico after the Mexican Revolution in 1821. With Mexican Independence, the removal of mendicant clergy and the remote location of New Mexico to the center of the new nation, communities in New Mexico found themselves without priests or any organized Catholic church. To sustain themselves, the men of the communities formed organizations similar to the old confraternities established by the Franciscans. Dedicated to maintaining order and helping the community, the Brotherhoods maintained the religious focus of the Fathers who had taught them for generations. This tradition included the Christocentric emphasis on the Passion of Christ. The need to act out the *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross) and participate in communal penance was part of Lenten activities.

By the mid-nineteenth century, these traditions had changed for most of the universal Catholic church, but had not in New Mexico. The secular bishops banned the Brotherhoods from public penance and use of the parish churches, but the Brotherhoods built chapels in the hills and used them to keep their traditional needs alive.

The Brotherhoods of Our Father Jesus the Nazarene, founded in Abiquiú, were as secretive as any other society. The brotherhoods seldom allowed outsiders to view their ceremonies or visit their chapels. In 1967, Dr. Richard Ahlborn of the Smithsonian Institute gained the trust of the two chapters in the town, and was allowed to enter the *moradas* and photograph, measure and record all of the contents, including the art inside.<sup>10</sup> Without these photographs, no clear history could be made of the content of this form of religious site. Seldom were written inventories kept. Studies by anthropologist, Marta Weigle; historians, Alice Henderson and Thomas J. Steele, SJ; folklorist, Louise Stark and many others, describe the Brotherhoods, their government, religious ceremonies, philosophy and art.<sup>11</sup> Ahlborn's photographs highlight the Brotherhood's traditional focus on the Passion of Jesus and the importance of the reenactment of Holy Week in the liturgical cycle. The altars of both chapels display all of the traditional *bultos* found in the penitential tradition: St. Francis, a number of crucifixes, Our Lady of Sorrow, Our Lady of Solitude, the

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<sup>10</sup>Richard E. Ahlborn, "The Penitente Moradas fo Abiquiú", Paper 63 on Contribution from the Museum of History and Technology (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1968).

<sup>11</sup>Marta Weigle, Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood: The Penitentes of the Southwest (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1976); Alice Corbin Henderson, Brothers of Light: The Penitentes of the Southwest (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1937); Thomas J. Steele, S.J. Santos and Saints: The Religious Folk Art of Hispanic New Mexico (Albuquerque: Calvin Horn Publishers, 1974; reprinted, Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1982); Louise Stark, "The Origin of the Penitente Death Cart," Journal of American Folklore 85 (1971): 304-310.

Immaculate Conception. St. Joseph with the Christ Child, and Jesus the Nazarene (Ecce Homo). Unique items, peculiar to the Brotherhoods were also found by Ahlborn. They maintained death carts, (which originated in Spain) and brought them out during Holy Week. They dragged large heavy wooden crosses from the *morada* to the site of Calvary and used cactus scourges for flagellation during penance. All of these items found in 1967 were similar to those noted by Father Domínguez in 1776, highlighting the age of some of these traditions.<sup>12</sup> Some of the *bultos* found in the chapels were of traditional characters but were dated by art historians as late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century. The artistic needs of these brotherhoods could not be met by the statue producers found in Catholic catalogues of the nineteenth century. There were no plaster of paris statues of Ecce Homo, or a life size crucified Christ with the pain of the Crucifixion on his face. None were rendered with the realism required by the Brotherhoods. *Santeros* continued to produce the art needed and by the end of the nineteenth century it was the art of the Passion.

It is not surprising that the influence of the French clergy on the *moradas* of the brotherhoods was nonexistent. As the bastions of traditional New Mexican Catholic religion, marginalized by officialdom for their unwillingness to conform, the *moradas* maintain the old ways. The design of the chapels, although simple,

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<sup>12</sup>Fray Francisco Atansio Dominguez, The Missions of the New Mexico, 1776 with other contemporary Documents, Edited and Translated by Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angelico Chavez. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1956.

can be traced back to the contracted sanctuary designs of much more elaborate churches found in Spain, Mexico and New Mexico.

Taken as a whole, utilizing the resources of photographers, early Spanish and Mexican church records, Archdiocesan records, diaries and observations of visitors, as well as the research of scholars in the fields of history, anthropology, archaeology, art history, church history, folklore, art restoration and architecture it is apparent that in the area of religious art the new American Catholic church with its predominantly French clergy did not make great inroads in influencing their New Mexican parishioners.

While change is found in the center of ecclesiastical power, it seems that the people were only marginally willing to accept change in the ornamentation of their religious sites. The Catholics of New Mexico were a homogenous culture. The families intermarried, fought indians together, farmed or raised livestock and used the *santos* designed by their own *santeros*. They had managed to sustain themselves through drought, floods, with priests or without, and while no doubt happy to have priests in their communities to perform the needed Sacraments, the people had developed traditions which would not be easily replaced. If it was going to happen, the community itself would have to desire the change and bring it about themselves.

A number of conclusions might be drawn from the limited change which the art reflects. Isolation and long standing traditions strongly influenced New

Mexican culture. Even during the period of the greatest and longest ecclesiastical influence, the number of Franciscan friars was far too few to serve both the Indians, their primary wards, and the Spanish population. Distance from the center of diocesan power, Durango, Mexico, left the population to its own devices as they attempted to maintain their traditions without the guidance of clergy. After Mexican independence even fewer priests came to New Mexico, leaving the population even more on its own.

The rise of penitential Brotherhoods, a natural outgrowth of community need and the old institutions of the Confraternities was particularly Spanish. Medieval confraternities occupied a place in society independent of the official church. As independent organizations, dedicated to a particular saint, Christ or the Virgin Mary, they were not answerable to the priests. Confraternities outside the control of the hierarchy and self-sustaining in character, developed their own institutions. This tradition traveled to the new world and to New Mexico.

When the post-Enlightenment, ultramontane clergy from France arrived in New Mexico, their inability to speak Spanish, their open contempt for the Mexican population, and their insistence upon priestly control of all parish organizations set up a framework for conflict. The French priests were also part of a conquering nation. While most New Mexicans were not strongly opposed to the new American government or its opening of trade, railroads, etc; as challenges to land deeds, water rights and statehood were put forward in the

courts, the New Mexicans saw themselves betrayed by the new government, the new leadership, and the new priests.

As the priests spread out over larger areas and took control of more and more parishes, the continued pressure to conform to French sensibilities met greater resistance. The geography, with the many mountain ranges and poor roads, also contributed to the difficulty of regular visits by the priests to their parishioners. This contributed to the New Mexican communities' ability to maintain their customs with less interference.

The art, which was produced in New Mexico, regardless of the poverty of the people, reflected the traditions, culture and faith of a people who had faced many of the challenges nature and man could produce. As such, it would take more than the insistence of a new priesthood, or the reading from the pulpit of a new Pastoral letter to convince the people to change the images they kept in their churches.

The Catholic church is universal, but the cultures which practice this religion are diverse. When two very different cultures come into conflict yet share the same religion, the art can be the eyes into the heart of the religious beliefs of the people, for it is the art which visually reflects the sentiments of the population of the region and the amount of influence held by the clergy over their parishioners.



## CHAPTER 1

### EARLY SPANISH AND MEXICAN RELIGIOUS ART AND TRADITIONS

From earliest Christian times art has played a part in the teaching of sacred scripture and traditions, aided the devout in worship, inspired the weary to greater endeavors, and called upon the Christian follower to sacrifice during this life for greater glory in the next. This is demonstrated in the religious art of the Roman Catholic tradition as seen through the devotional art of Christ and the Virgin Mary. As early as the Second Council of Nicaea (AD 787), the Roman Catholic Church recognized the value of devotional art and its place in the lives of the devout follower:

Images of Christ and of His Virgin Mother and of other saints are to be made and to be kept, and due honor and veneration is to be given them; not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them on account of which they would have to be honored, or that any prayer is to be addressed to them, or that any confidence is to be placed in them, as was formerly done by the heathens, who placed their hopes in idols: but because the honor which is given them is referred to the originals which they represent; so that by kissing the images, by uncovering our heads or kneeling before them, we adore Christ and venerate His saints, whose likeness they represent.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Documents of Second Council of Nicaea as quoted in J. L. Cassidy, Mexico: Land of Mary's Wonders (Patterson, N.J.: St. Anthony's Guild, 1958), p. x.

As the late sixteenth-century Spanish painter, teacher, and critic Francisco Pacheco stated in his work, El arte de la pintura, Christian art not only had as its aim the approximation of what it intended to imitate; it also had the responsibility to advance the highest order of virtue, which was the contemplation of eternal glory. Finally "as it keeps men from vice, so it leads them to the true devotion of God our Lord."<sup>2</sup> While the principal goal of Christian images has always been to persuade men to be pious and to lead them to God, it also has a number of secondary roles. Artists were commissioned to paint or sculpt art which would lead individuals to express penitence, to accept suffering with courage, to encourage charity, to foster contempt of the world, and to serve the common good by acting as books for those who could not read.<sup>3</sup>

The notion of Divine Presence is central to understanding the significance of the liturgy and to understanding the purpose of all religious practices and of religious art. It is within the context of the liturgy that Christian images find their source and meaning, for they are both the physical and visual embodiments of Divine Presence. The emphasis of the early Medieval Church, which continued in the Eastern Orthodox Church, had been upon the Resurrection and

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<sup>2</sup>Robert Enggass and Johnathan Brown, Italy and Spain, 1600-1750: Sources and Documents (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), pp. 162-163.

<sup>3</sup>Enggass and Brown, Italy and Spain: Documents, pp. 161-167. Pacheco's treatise on the art of the picture includes techniques for producing religious art, discussions of the place of art in culture, and detailed discussions of iconography and how it should be used by the artist.

upon participation in Christ's transcendent Divinity. The art of this period reflects a powerful resurrected Christ, often seen enthroned in heaven with a book inscribed "Ego Sum Lux Mundi," (I am the Light of the World).<sup>4</sup> By the end of the Middle Ages, there was a shift in emphasis to the humanity of Christ - His suffering and sacrifice for man. From its earliest days Christian leaders debated the humanity and divinity of Jesus Christ. Theologians debated the question for years, fought perceived heresies and excommunicated men. Christian churches divided over the issues of the humanity/divinity of Jesus. In 449, Pope Leo the Great in a letter addressed to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, expressed the doctrine of incarnation

In Christ there are two distinct natures united in one person: For he who is truly God is the same who is also truly human and there is no deception in this unity in which the lowliness of a human being and the divine majesty coincide. . . . For each of the two natures performs the functions proper to it in communion with the other. The Word does what pertains to the Word and the flesh what pertains to the flesh. <sup>5</sup>

Leo the Great also linked Christology, the theological study of Jesus Christ with Soteriology, the study of salvation.<sup>6</sup> Pope Leo's statement did not end the

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<sup>4</sup>William Wroth, Images of Penance, Images of Mercy: Southwestern Santos in Late Nineteenth Century (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Letter to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople from Pope Leo the Great dated June 449 as quoted in Richard P. McBrien, Catholicism, Vol I (Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press, 1980), P. 454.

<sup>6</sup>Christology is the theological study of Jesus Christ, his natures, person, ministry, consciousness, etc. Soteriology is the study of salvation and is an area of theology which focuses on the passion, death, resurrection and exaltation of

debates. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1033-1109), in Book One of Cur Deus Homo put forward his Theory of Satisfaction. Anselm, in an attempt to understand redemption, argued that mankind's sin disturbed the order of the universe. Something was needed to restore the order, but mankind was not up to the task. Since the sin was an offense to the infinite God, then satisfaction could only be provided by the infinite but could not be given by God. There needed to be one who was both human and divine. Anselm believed there was a need for more than an incarnation. Jesus must do something, as a human, that was not required of him. Sinless, Jesus was not required to die, but he does accept death as payment for the sins of mankind. Anselm's point of view makes sense when one looks at the society he lived in. Medieval feudal society was based on a bond of honor between lord and vassal and infringement of the lord's honor was seen as an attack upon all of society. Satisfaction was demanded not for the individual slighted but to restore order to the feudal system. An offense could not be overlooked because the order of the lord's whole society was at stake. Anselm transferred this view of secular world stability to God. Sin had to be dealt with to maintain order in God's world. Jesus Christ by becoming man was the tool and his sacrifice was the restoration of order.<sup>7</sup>

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Christ in so far as they bring about mankind's salvation.

<sup>7</sup>McBrien, Catholicism I, pp. 300-304, 461-462.

Later, Thomas Aquinas was to modify Anselm's theory when he argued in Question 1, Answer 2 of the third volume of Summa Theologica that it was fitting for God to act the way he did, but it was not necessary as Anselm had insisted. As Aquinas continued, God became human because " . . .it belongs to the essence of goodness to communicate itself to others, . . .(and) to the essence of the highest goodness to communicate itself in the highest manner to the creature."<sup>8</sup> In answer 2 Aquinas argued that the incarnation deepened mankind's faith in goodness, strengthened one's hope, sparked charity, set an example, turned one from evil, divines one, heightens one's sense of human dignity, destroys one's presumptions about grace and salvation, removes pride and frees one from sin. Given that the incarnation frees humanity from sin, it was fitting that Jesus Christ served as mankind's Mediator between God and humanity since he alone was God and humanity united.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>From Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica III, q.1, a1 as quoted in McBrien, Catholicism I, p. 463.

<sup>9</sup>In 1215 the Fourth Lateran General Council called by Pope Innocent III produced a profession of Trinitarian faith as well as a formal doctrine statement on the reality of the triune God. ". . . there is only one true God . . . Father, Son and Holy Spirit: three persons indeed by one essence, substance or wholly simple nature. . . .the Father generating, the Son being born, the Holy Spirit proceeding; consubstantial, co-equal, co-omnipotent and co-eternal; one origin of all three: the Creator of all things visible and invisible, spiritual and corporal." God is creator of both matter and spirit. Christ is fully God and has both human and divine nature. Quoted in McBrien, Catholicism I, p.302. For additional works on the study of the Trinity and conflicts see Karl Rahner, Foundations of Christian Faith (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), pp. 44-89.; Kimball Kehoe, ed. Theology of God: Sources (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1971); J.N.D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines (New York: Harper and Row, 1960); Piet Smulders,

While Anselm's and later Aquinas' theories of why Jesus became man never became an official teaching of the Church, over time many Catholics incorrectly assumed it to be at least doctrine, if not dogma. As Richard McBrien notes in his seminal work, Catholicism, "for Roman Catholic theology the resurrection has long been viewed as simply the strongest possible corroboration of Jesus' messianic claims. It had no importance in itself in the work of redemption. We were redeemed by the cross, and by the cross alone."<sup>10</sup> This view of Jesus and the cross with its redemptive powers became the focus of the Catholic church. Later this view of redemption was interpreted even more severely by Luther and Calvin as they taught that Christ died as our substitute in punishment for sin.

The new orientation, as expressed in the liturgy, stressed the Passion and Burial of Christ rather than His resurrection. The sacrament of Communion and taking part in the sacrifice of Christ became the central focus of the liturgy.

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The Fathers in Christology: The Development of Christological Dogma from the Bible to the Great Councils (De Pere, WI: St. Norbert Abbey Press, 1968); McBrien, Catholicism, I, pp. 283-341; 439-468.

<sup>10</sup>McBrien, Catholicism, I, p.405. Christian theology today, following modern New Testament studies more commonly understand the resurrection as central to, not simple confirmation of, Christian faith and that it is the beginning not the end of the Christian story. For a more indepth study of this issue see Raymond Brown, "'Who do Men say That I Am?' Modern Scholarship on Gospel Christology," Horizons Vol 1, 1974, pp. 35-50; Reginald Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology (New York: Scribner, 1965); Dermot A. Lane, The Reality of Jesus: An Essay in Christology (New York: Paulist Press, 1975); McBrien, Catholicism I, pp.391-437.

Veneration of the Holy Eucharist as the sole symbol of Divine Presence began during this period. This humanizing of Christ established a more personal and individual relationship between man and God. The imitation of Christ's example became central to the ultimate salvation of the Christian.<sup>11</sup>

In Christian history, graphic symbols and later art works illustrated the dogma, doctrine and teachings of the Catholic church. Often those same symbols and art works were found in chapels, churches, homes, catacombs and on the tombs of the Christian followers of Jesus. Reflecting the emphasis of the time, the religious art moved from symbols of the resurrection, which dominated early medieval and Byzantine art to that of the Passion of Christ. In Christian society, the humanization of Christ demanded that the believer duplicate Christ's example. The art reflected the human side of Jesus. Painting reflected stories in his life, from his birth through the Crucifixion and burial. An individual's imitation of Christ was the ultimate goal and for the illiterate and untrained, painting, sculpture, murals and plays told the stories the Christian was to learn and imitate. With the cross as the source of redemption and Holy Week, which culminated with the crucifixion and burial of Christ, as the center of the liturgical year the Passion of Jesus Christ was the new focus of Christian action and the focus of Christian art.

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<sup>11</sup>William Wroth, Christian Images in Hispanic New Mexico (Colorado Springs: Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center and University of Washington Press, 1982), pp. 13-15; and Joseph A. Jungmann, S.J., The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development, vol. 1 (n.p., 1951), p. 193.

Generally, religious art of this period is divided into two categories: narrative and devotional. As the names imply, narrative art tells a story, depicts an incident, actual or legendary, in the lives of Christ, Mary or the Saints, placing these persons on a terrestrial rather than a spiritual plane. A devotional work places these characters on a spiritual plane. The characters in devotional art are dead. The background is dark, taking the central character out of any earthly context. Only the attributes of the saint - his or her identifying features - are found with the figure. One common attribute is a palm frond, the symbol for martyrdom and a symbol for the method of death. The focus of a devotional work was the human being who was martyred for their faith and was looked to for the strength.<sup>12</sup> The Nativity by Juan de Flandes is an example of the narrative style. The story told is of the birth of Jesus. With clothing and scenery of the late 1400's Mary, the virgin mother and Joseph her husband attend to the baby laying on a cloth in a stable. Angels proclaim the birth of this child with shepherd listening and animals looking on (Figure 1.1). Santa Lucia by Zurbarán is an example of devotional art. St. Lucy holds the attributes which identify her to the onlooker, a palm branch ( the sign of martyrdom) and two eyes on a plate (which relate to an episode on her life when she plucked out her eyes after a suitor had fallen in love with her because of her beautiful eyes. The

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<sup>12</sup> Arthur de Bles, How to Distinguish the Saints in Art (New York: Art Culture Publications, Inc., 1935), p. 15; and Clara Erskines Clement Waters, Saints in Art (Boston: L.C. Page Co, 1899; reprint ed., Detroit: Gale Research Co, 1974) , pp. 11-21.



suitor became a Christian and Lucy's eyes were restored.) In this devotional work the background is dark, taking her out of time and space. She is prayed to by those with eye diseases (Figure 1.2).

Reverence toward the sacred image was the result of an ongoing reverence accorded to the subject. It was also possible to be devoted to more than one divine figure.<sup>13</sup> In the Spanish Catholic tradition of the Middle Ages there was a strong devotion to the sacrifice of Christ as seen in acts of penance but also a devotion to Mary as a bearer of mercy. The balance of these two things, penance and mercy, is central to the study and understanding of the Hispanic Catholic church, wherever it is found -- Spain, New Spain, or New Mexico.

Originating in Spain, carried to colonial Mexico and ultimately transported to New Mexico by the Spanish conquerors, the devotional images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saints reflect the two dominant artistic traditions.

Copies of devotional images were available in all media: paint, prints, and sculpture. Initially, paintings were small, depicting Christ, the Virgin, archangels, and human saints and were intended for private devotions, to inspire faithful emulation of the individual depicted and to provide a channel of grace for those devoted to the personage. Simple in design, with the figure presented on a plain background abstracted from any worldly activity and identified by certain attributes, these devotional paintings continued to be produced for years with

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<sup>13</sup>William Christian, Jr., Person and God in a Spanish Village (New York: Seminar Press, 1972), p. 47.



Figure 1.1 The Nativity by Juan de Flandes (active 1496-1519). An example of Spanish narrative art. The story told is of the birth of Jesus. Samuel H. Kress Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Figure 1.2 Santa Lucia (St. Lucy) by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664). An example of Spanish devotional art. Gift of Chester Dale, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

very little change. With the advent of printing in the fifteenth-century, traditional devotional images in printed breviaries, missals, and hymnals became popular. Woodcuts and engravings replaced paintings, since they were far cheaper to transport from one location to another, but the subjects were the same, allowing for minor changes by the artists.<sup>14</sup>

Realism was the goal in religious processional sculpture. Sculpture was to evoke the passion of the viewer, to move him or her to devotion. Polychromed wood was the choice of the sculptors of the Hispanic world.<sup>15</sup>

Polychromed wood is a process of coloring wood. In Spanish religious art the process resembled that of tempera painting. First the wood was primed with glue to cover the cracks. Large crevices were filled with primed wooden pegs and covered with canvas. The surface was then polished. Several layers of thick lusterless gesso were brushed on with great care taken not to distort the original shape of the sculpture. All except the flesh parts were covered with bolus (red earth to provide elasticity) and then gold leaf was applied and burnished to attain

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<sup>14</sup>Wroth, Christian Images, pp. 29-31.

<sup>15</sup>David Freedberg, The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 242. George Kubler and M. Soria, Art and Architecture in Spain and Portugal and their American Dominions, 1500-1800 (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1959), pp. 123-124. Susan Verdi Webster, Art and Ritual in Golden Age Spain (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp.108-110. Later in the nineteenth-century, an American visitor to New Mexican churches would continually refer to the wax statues of saints. The polychromed techniques created a highly glossed surface, mistaken by the American as wax. George Wilkins Kendell, Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition, 1841 (New York: n.p., 1844), p. 339.

luster and reflect light. After this process was complete the painting was done. After applying paint to the gold, the metal was partially uncovered by scratching or hatching thereby increasing the luminosity and achieving an illusion of gold brocade. The flesh was painted in oils over white lead and then varnished to give brilliancy.

The attention given to Christ's Passion and the greater personalization of the Christian's commitment to imitate Christ's human life, in particular his suffering, were central to medieval Catholic theology. The two central and organizing symbols in every Catholic Hispanic community were the Crucified Christ and the Virgin Mary. From the Crucified Christ came the call for penance and from Mary the granting of mercy.

The sacrament of Penance absolved the sins of the Christian through the grace of Christ. Penance in the medieval church took many forms. It could be individual with a person performing private acts of devotion and penance, or it could be communal. Public penance traditionally began on Ash Wednesday at the beginning of Lent and continued through Maundy Thursday, on which the Bishop would absolve the sins of the worthy allowing participation in the masses of Good Friday and Easter Sunday.<sup>16</sup> Penance could be a very severe affair. Some of the more drastic practices included willing crucifixion in reenactment of

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<sup>16</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, p.4.

the death of Christ, long and arduous pilgrimages, withdrawal from all human social contacts, and self-applied whipping.<sup>17</sup>

Even during the eight centuries of Moorish influence (AD 710-1492), the Spanish Catholic church remained strong and reestablished its ties to Rome in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In the thirteenth century the new mendicant orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans, quickly established themselves in Spain just as they did in the rest of Europe. Both orders were devoted to the ideal of penance and were instrumental in spreading the new devotion to the suffering of Christ.<sup>18</sup> By the end of the fifteenth century they had spread the devotion to the Passion of Christ throughout Spain and through all classes.

To encourage lay support and devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, the mendicants founded two types of organizations. Third Orders were religious groups which allowed men and women to participate in a monastic life style without becoming members of the founding orders. The regime was strict and generally individuals gave up most of their lives outside of their devotions. Far more common was the confraternity which was designed for laymen and laywomen who wished to participate with others in their devotion to God, Christ,

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<sup>17</sup>Robert B. McCoy, "Brothers of Light - The Penitents," in The Penitentes of New Mexico, ed. Carlos E. Cortes (New York: Arno Press, 1974), p. 73.

<sup>18</sup>A mendicant order is one which forbids the owning of property, the members living on alms begged from the people. The two best known examples of mendicant orders are the Dominicans (founded by the Castilian, Dominic) and the Franciscans (founded by the Italian, Francis of Assisi).

and the Virgin. Most of the confraternities had a two-fold purpose, to seek salvation through penance and to perform acts of mercy (often in the form of charity). "As conceived in the minds of members, confraternities were microcosms of the ideal Christian world of love and equality among believers."<sup>19</sup> In Spain, Confraternities arose in many cities, towns, and villages resulting in active lay participation in spiritual activities. The congregations dedicated themselves to the Blessed Virgin, patron saints, and the Holy Sacrament. Most of the confraternities sought to merit the salvation that Christ offered mankind by the physical punishment of their bodies through self-flagellation. The names of some of the Spanish confraternities illustrate this emphasis: *Vera Cruz* (True Cross), *Sangre de Cristo* (Blood of Christ), *Las Angustias de Cristo* (The Affliction of Christ), *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Our Father Jesus Nazarene), *Santo Sepulcro* (Holy Sepulchre), *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores* (Our Lady of Sorrows), and *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad* (Our Lady of Solitude).<sup>20</sup>

According to Maureen Flynn, in her study of confraternities in Spain from 1400 to 1700, "reenacting religious deeds was a way of recording history, of making the Christian past come alive in the mind without the aid of the written word. It was an old medieval technique that the more literate society of the

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<sup>19</sup>Flynn, Sacred Charity, p. 33.

<sup>20</sup>Christian, Local Religion, pp. 185-187.

modern period recognized as a form of 'writing'." Reenactments occurred during the entire liturgical year, but the emphasis was on Lent, and particularly Holy Week.<sup>21</sup> The entire community participated in the Passion plays and the processions. Penitents converted their village streets into the route to Calvary. They carried on their shoulders wide platforms with statues made of *papier mache* and canvas representing Christ's trials. Groups within the village coordinated episodic reenactments of the crucifixion. In the 1588 Statutes of the Vera Cruz of Argujillo Confraternity the rules for a Holy Thursday procession state:

we proceed barefoot, in remembrance of the cruel nailing, and we go pouring blood from our bodies, in memory of the blood Our Lord shed that day...and we go scourging the shoulders, because by doing this, we are crowned with blessings of glory with the Good Authors.<sup>22</sup>

By personally re-enacting Christ's trial, members were sharing in the pain of redemption. They sought salvation by bearing the punishment for sin upon their bodies, illustrating the Christocentric foundation of the confraternities.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Maureen Flynn. Sacred Charity: Confraternities and Social Welfare in Spain, 1400-1700 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1989), p. 141. This book provides a detailed look at the confraternity system in Spain, including processions, charities, membership, and focii.

<sup>22</sup>*Archivo de la Mitra de Zamora*, Libro 66, introduction to ordinances, quoted in Flynn, Sacred Charity, p. 131.

<sup>23</sup>This is particularly true after the reform movements began in the late-sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries in response to the Reformation and Council of Trent. A shift occurred with the official church promoting Arch-confraternities under clerical control designed to clarify Catholic doctrine and present Mary as part of the Crucifixion story as the sorrowing Mother. Maureen Flynn's Sacred



The love of Christ was expressed especially in their devotion to the images of Jesus and His Sorrowing Mother. Images became central elements in the penitential processions of Holy Week. All processions incorporated Passion plays which include all the crucial events of Christ's life. Artists crafted images of penance for the Penitential celebrations, particularly the images of Jesus the Nazarene and Our Lady of Solitude. Carved from wood and clothed, the statues of Christ and Mary usually had articulated arms and legs allowing for movement. Jesus the Nazarene at the center of a platform, could carry a cross or be attached to a column to reenact the scourging. Articulation also allowed the arms of the figures to move so they could embrace at the last meeting of Mother and Son. There was also the articulated *Cristo Entierro* (Christ entombed) with hinged arms and holes in the feet and hands so the figure could be crucified, taken from the Cross, and placed in the Holy Sepulchre.<sup>24</sup>

The processions had a number of participants. Among the penitents were the Brothers of Light and the Brothers of Blood. The Brothers of Light carried

Images and Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (New York: New York University Press, 1978), pp. 232-243, detail the changes brought by the Counter Reformation.

<sup>24</sup>William A. Christian, Jr., "Provoking Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain." In Religious Organization and Religious Experience (Association of Social Anthropologists Series 21) edited by John Davis (London, 1982), pp.97-114; William A. Christian, Jr., Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 185-189; Stanley G. Payne, Spanish Catholicism: An Historical Overview (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984) pp. 44-50.

candles while marching followed by the Brothers of Blood, who, stripped to the waist (wearing hoods to hide their identities), whipped themselves during the procession.<sup>25</sup>

Until late in the sixteenth-century women in Spain participated with the men in penitential activities. Women represented the virtue of mercy along with Mary and in this role they were not allowed to flagellate. Their task was to carry torches and candles to comfort victims. Some of the women imitated Veronica by wiping blood and sweat from the faces of the men with large veils. It was also customary for the women to circulate with their faces covered in their own informal processions around the city's churches to visit the stations of the Cross and reenact visual experiences of Mary.<sup>26</sup>

Missionaries and wealthy individuals brought from Spain many of the artistic images developed during this period and later found in New Mexico well into the twentieth-century. In addition to Jesus the Nazarene, Our Lady of Solitude and *Cristo Entierro*, statues of Our Lady of Sorrows were also brought by the religious. These images showed Mary with seven swords coming out of

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<sup>25</sup>The penitents were hooded and dressed alike so the identity of each would not be known. The idea was to prevent an individual from attempting severe self-flagellation due to pride or the desire to impress the viewers with his piety. A detailed description can be found in George Foster, Culture and Conquest: America's Spanish Heritage (New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc., 1960), p. 181; Webster, Art and Ritual, pp. 3-56.

<sup>26</sup>Flynn, Sacred Images, pp. 132-133.

her body, representing her seven sorrows.<sup>27</sup> Our Lady of Solitude is depicted as a widow in mourning for the loss of her Son. Both images of Mary gained followings as the Passion became even more important to the Counter-Reformation Spanish church.

With the increased interest during the Middle Ages in Christ's humanity, Christ's childhood also became a focus of attention. It was during the Middle Ages that the Christmas creche first became popular. Initially Mother and Child were emphasized with the devotion to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as exemplars of the human family coming later.<sup>28</sup> It was also during the Middle Ages that the cult of Mary began to blossom. From the twelfth-century on, the Virgin's reputation was based upon her willingness to extend aid to anyone who called upon her for help. Mary was the epitome of human goodness. She did not exercise her compassion in a judgemental way. "The Virgin Mary succoring the needy personified the spirit of beneficence and Christian love."<sup>29</sup> Mendicant friars instructed the public using Marian devotions. The Rosary, promoted by the Dominicans, (thirteenth century) and

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<sup>27</sup> In Luke 2:35 the prophet Simeon predicted this sorrow to Mary by telling her, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." In place of seven swords Our Lady of Sorrows is sometimes presented with one dagger piercing her heart symbolizing the piercing of her heart with sorrow at the death of her son.

<sup>28</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 12-13.

<sup>29</sup>Flynn, Sacred Charity, p. 28.

the Ave Maria prayer were products of this period. To the average Spaniard, Mary seemed a more dependable source of mercy than Christ, since she might be able to soften his demand for justice. While attempting during this period to show Christ as more compassionate, He was still seen as unapproachable as God. Mary was seen as closer to human frailty and weakness and so she received the first requests for aid from God. "To those in need no other divine figure equalled the status of the mother and no other sacred symbol so calmed their anxieties and indulged their fantasies. She was *partenos* or Virgin, the guarantee of man's soul for having refused to admit his body."<sup>30</sup>

Confraternities developed intimate relationships with the mother of God. Members of the confraternities molded the Virgin into a patroness whose concern extended to everyone. Unlike the specific saints who addressed a particular group of people, Mary was universal and could be called upon in any circumstance.<sup>31</sup> As the personification of Divine mercy, Mary is portrayed artistically in many forms. Two of the better known devotions to Mary are Our Lady of the Rosary and Our Lady of Mercy. Our Lady of the Rosary came from the legend that the

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<sup>30</sup>Flynn, Sacred Charity, p. 29.

<sup>31</sup>Specific groups often claim a particular saint as their protector or intercessor. The groups chose a saint either for the method of martyrdom or an incident in the saint's life which they believed made the saint close to them. For example, St. Catherine of Alexandria was a scholar who, as the story goes, by the strength of her arguments converted 300 wisemen to Christianity and was martyred on a large wheel. She is the patron saint of wheelwrights and women scholars. In art she is always portrayed in front of a large wheel, the source of her martyrdom.

Virgin appeared to St. Dominic, the founder of the Dominican Order, and gave him a rosary to be used in prayer for the world. In painting, the central character is the Virgin, holding a rosary, with the three types of mysteries surrounding her.<sup>32</sup> Our Lady of Mercy portrays Mary standing and gathering under her mantle crowds of the kneeling faithful whom she is protecting. When a painting was commissioned by a monastic order or confraternity the kneeling crowds wore the habit or clothing of the order/brotherhood.<sup>33</sup> It was during the Middle Ages, with the Virgin representing the perfect human soul, pure and selfless, that the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception gained in importance. It was vigorously promoted by the Franciscans and spread throughout the Hispanic New World.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>The rosary is a form of devotion to the Virgin Mary. This devotion consists of a series of devotions and prayers centered on events in the lives of Christ and the Virgin. These meditations are known as mysteries and are divided into three groups: joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries. The prayers of the rosary are counted on a string of beads. The beads are strung in sets of five with a different bead dividing each set/series. In painting sometimes the rosary is represented as a wreath of roses in which the color of the flowers, red, white and gold/yellow, represent the mysteries. St. Dominic is often portrayed with a rosary in his hand and so is St. Catherine of Siena, one of the great Dominican saints.

<sup>33</sup>Wroth, Christian Images, p. 20; Flynn, Sacred Charity, p.125; George Ferguson, Signs and Symbols in Christian Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 94-96, 168-69.

<sup>34</sup>Wroth, Christian Images, p. 20; deBles, How to Distinguish Saints, p. 15; Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 13. In the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception it is argued that Mary was born without the taint of original sin and therefore placed above the rest of humanity. It became official church doctrine in 1854. For more on the Iconography of the Immaculate Conception see Mirella Levi

As the theme of the Passion gained more influence and meditation on Christ's suffering gained support, new images of the Virgin became important. With the Crucifix gaining iconographic importance, Mary, at the foot of the Cross fainting as the nails are driven into her son's hands was increasingly represented. The *Pieta* came into fashion.<sup>35</sup> The *pieta* is the image of the dead Christ in the arms of the Virgin Mary. (Figure 1.3) The Virgin Mary, while still portrayed as the mother of Jesus and as the Immaculate Conception, was increasingly portrayed in the context of the Passion story. This is the woman who had lost her son and mourned that loss. The new Marian devotions promoted during the Counter Reformation expressed a standardized, sober, orthodox piety adapted to Tridentine Christology with less emphasis on Mary's curative and consoling powers.<sup>36</sup>

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D'Ancona, The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance (n.p.: The College Art Association of America in Conjunction with the Art Bulletin, 1957).

<sup>35</sup>Gertrud Schiller, Iconography of Christian art, vol. 2: The Passion of Jesus Christ, trans. Janet Seligman (London: Lund Humphries, 1972), pp. 12, 87.

<sup>36</sup>Flynn, Sacred Images, p. 125-126; Schiller, Iconography of Christian Art, p. 11. During the Counter-Reformation, Erasmus and others complained that Jesus was never an adult in the context of most medieval art. Changes occur in the art from the young mother holding her baby son in her arms to the *Pieta* image of the sorrowing mother bracing the figure of her martyred son. By focusing on the suffering of the Virgin, the Tridentine reformers, mentioned earlier in this work sought to redirect all attention to the crucial event of Christian theology as they saw it - the redemption of Christ. Church fathers wanted to divest Mary of the potency of her nurturing reputation by condemning as indecent the artwork what showed Mary offering milk from her breast to the infant Jesus. The earlier image of Mary Our Lady of Mercy was also played



Figure 1.3 *Pieta* by Gregorio Fernández (c. 1576-1636). Located at the Valladolid Museum. From Germain Bazin, *Baroque and Rococo* (New York: Thames and Hudson, Inc.: 1964), p. 53.

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down by the Counter-Reformation church because it was believed that the artwork of the Madonna shielding humanity under her cloak from the pains of life and the wrath of God implied the Virgin's sovereignty in deciding the fate of man on earth. None of these moves were inconsistent with the Christocentric movement of the church during the Counter-Reformation and earlier.

This image had great drawing power, but by the nineteenth-century the images of Mary as the protector of lost souls and the ill was to ultimately supersede the sorrowful lady in the everyday life of the Hispanic Catholic.

After Spanish conquistadors defeated the Aztecs in the Valley of Mexico in the 1520's, Spain established the Viceregency of New Spain in colonial Mexico and began expanding northward toward the present American Southwest. As it did so, the primary responsibility for the spread of Christianity in colonial Mexico was given to the mendicant orders: first, the Franciscans and later the Dominicans. Reformers of these orders wishing to return to the original vigor of their founders untouched by material wants and gains, saw the New World as a place untouched by worldliness. The friars thought they could easily reform the Indians, and the church in colonial Mexico could found a new "Age of the Holy Spirit." As time progressed Augustinians, Jesuits, Carmelites, and other religious orders came to colonial Mexico. Friars and settlers brought Hispanic Catholicism with them and it moved north as settlement and missionary endeavors expanded to new frontiers.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 21. On Franciscan Millennialism and early conversion in Mexico see Charles S. Braden, Religious Aspects of the Conquest of Mexico (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1930); Richard E. Greenleaf, ed., The Roman Catholic Church in Colonial Latin America (Tempe, AZ: Center for Latin American Studies, 1977); John L. Phelan, The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970); Robert Ricard, The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: An Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain: 1523-1572 trans. Lesley Byrd Simpson (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966).



The basic patterns of the liturgical year traveled with the Spaniards. Colonial Mexico celebrated the Epiphany, Candlemas, Lent, Holy Week, Corpus Christi, All Saints Day, All Souls Day, and Christmas, plus the fiesta of the patron saint of each community.<sup>38</sup> During the ceremonies of Lent and Holy Week (with flagellant processions, and reenactments of the Passion and crucifixion) the necessary images of Christ and the sorrowing mother all played their familiar roles. The devotion to Mary as the source of divine mercy also developed strong roots in colonial Mexico. The laymen and laywomen settling in the New World found their spiritual lives following the same practices and activities they had known in Spain. In its thoughts, words and actions Mexican Catholicism of the sixteenth century was above all Spanish Catholicism.<sup>39</sup> Confraternities flourished with the first penitential brotherhood, the *Vera Cruz*, established in Mexico within the first year of conquest. Both public and private penitential practices dedicated to the love of God continued. The mendicant friars, particularly the Franciscans, inspired the laity by their own actions.<sup>40</sup> The Franciscans were the first order to venture into the western and northern frontiers of colonial Mexico. While their primary purpose was the conversion of

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<sup>38</sup>Foster, Culture and Conquest, p. 165.

<sup>39</sup>See Ricard, The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico.

<sup>40</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 20-23.

Indians, they also served the Spaniards in all of the newly established *villas* (Spanish towns). With them went the Third orders and Confraternities they so strongly supported in Spain.

The Third Orders were not as influential in colonial Mexico as they had been in Spain due to their late establishment ( most were not founded until the early seventeenth century, nearly 100 years after conquest). The very nature of the Third Orders, which required the emulation of the lives of friars and withdrawal from the world, also proved to be an obstacle to their acceptance in the New World, and the fact that until the time of Mexican independence (1821), they were open only to members of pure Spanish blood also limited their appeal.<sup>41</sup> In colonial Mexico, the Third Orders were generally established in larger towns and cities such as Mexico City and Zacatecas, with enough wealthy Spaniards to maintain the tradition of processions and fiestas expected from the organizations.<sup>42</sup> One of the most important public activities associated with the Third Orders and the passion of Christ was the construction and maintenance of the *Via Crucis* (Stations of the Cross). The Stations of the Cross was a popular devotional observance that had been supported by the mendicants for many years.

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<sup>41</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 30.

<sup>42</sup>Foster, Culture and Conquest, p. 167.

It was a miniature pilgrimage to Jerusalem for those who could not afford to go.<sup>43</sup>

The confraternities were far more popular and numerous in colonial Mexico than the Third Orders. They were among the first Catholic institutions established in the New World, and many of the familiar Spanish confraternities also arose in colonial Mexico and subsequently moved into New Mexico with the movement of the settlers. As in Spain, there were confraternities for all segments of society. In colonial Mexico, confraternities formed among the Indian, mixed blood, and Spanish populations. Fray Geronimo de Mendieta mentions in his Historia Ecclesiastica Indiana a number of confraternities, including *Vera Cruz*, *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad*, *Nombre de Jesus*, and

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<sup>43</sup>Typically *Via Crucis* was made up of fourteen stations arranged along a road leading to the hill of Calvary. The pilgrim would travel from station to station reliving an incident of the final days of Christ. In their simplest form the stations were marked by a cross and a number. Artistically, the station is accompanied by a painting or relief of a particular scene. The cross was essential because in Jerusalem the sites from which the custom of following the path of Christ arose were marked with small crosses. During the development of the *Via Crucis* there were various number of stations, finally being codified into fourteen by the Franciscan, S. Leonardo of Porto Maurizio (1676-1751) in the 1720s. The fourteen stations are: (1) Christ is condemned by Pilate, (2) Christ is laden with his Cross, (3) Christ falls for the first time, (4) Christ meets his sorrowing mother, (5) Simon of Cyrene is forced to help Christ with the Cross, (6) Veronica wipes Christ's face with a cloth, (7) Christ falls for the second time, (8) Christ meets the women of Jerusalem, (9) Christ falls for the third time, (10) Christ is stripped of his garments, (11) Christ is nailed to the cross, (12) Christ dies on the Cross, (13) Christ's body is taken down from the Cross, (14) Christ is laid in the sepulchre. Oxford Companion to Christian Art, pp. 505-506; See Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 30.

*Santisimo Sacramento*.<sup>44</sup> "The confraternities provided the most important means for active involvement in Church functions by the laity, giving them both a focus for the devotions and a role to play in the maintenance of the culture, for it was through the confraternities that the wide range of Catholic worship - the panoply of popular saints, advocations of Jesus and Mary, and yet other devotions could be successfully maintained." <sup>45</sup>

As the Franciscans moved northward from Mexico City, they took with them the confraternity system. The city of Guadalajara was founded in 1542; with the confraternities of *Santa Veracruz* and *Sangre de Cristo* established in 1551 and *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad* and *Santo Entierro de Cristo* (Holy Burial of Christ) in 1589. Zacatecas founded in 1548 had similar confraternities established in the city soon after.<sup>46</sup> This continued to occur as the Spanish moved northward and westward.

Fray Dávila Padilla in his Historia de la Fundación, first published in 1596, records the ceremony of the Descent and Burial of Christ on Good Friday during Lent as carried out by the Confraternity of *Santo Entierro*. The confraternity of Santo Entierro (also called the *Descendimiento y Sepulcro*) was

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<sup>44</sup>For more information on membership in Spain's confraternities see Flynn, Sacred Charity, pp. 23-25.; on membership in colonial Mexico's confraternities see Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 21.

<sup>45</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 26.

<sup>46</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 23-26.

founded in Rome in the mid-1500s by a Dominican friar and established in Mexico in 1582. The principal activity of this brotherhood was the ritual enactment of the descent from the Cross and the burial of Christ. This ceremony highlights many of the popular images of the Passion, images propagated in Spain, carried to Mexico and transported to New Mexico. Large bultos of Christ and Our Lady of Solitude were part of the celebration. The images were articulated so they can move and act out moments of the Passion. The crown of thorns, the nails of the Crucifixion, the vinegar-soaked sponge, and the veil of Veronica are all apart of the ceremony. The procession was followed by members of the confraternity of Santo Entierro who scourged themselves drawing their own blood. The image of Christ was laid in a sepulchre and carried to the church. On Easter morning a triumphant and joyful procession took place to commemorate the Resurrection. All members dressed in white and the image of the Resurrected Christ was the center of the procession. In the procession the image was joined by a statue of Our Lady of the Rosary and the Most Holy Sacrament (the Eucharist). The priests said mass and a brief sermon ended with the reminder, "and with this the sorrow of the burial of Christ our Lord is finished in joy; *this is the end that our penitence in this life will have* (italics mine): to be rewarded afterwards with glory in the other life."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Father Agustín Dávila Padilla, Historia de la Fundación y Discurso da la Provincia de Santiago de México, de la Orden de Predicadores, 1596. Reprint. Mexico, 1955. Found in Wroth, Images of Pentance, pp. 21-23.

While this ceremony of the Descent and Burial of Christ was being performed throughout colonial Mexico, the Spanish clergy and settlers were continuing to move north. In 1598, the first permanent settlement of San Juan de los Caballeros was established on the west bank of the Rio Grande in New Mexico by Juan de Oñate with the first church dedicated to San Juan Bautista (John the Baptist). In 1610 Santa Fe de San Francisco was founded. As in all of the communities of the frontier, the Franciscans established their missions for the Pueblo Indians and secondarily administered to the Spanish residents. Few documents have survived the period of settlement through the Reconquest in 1692;<sup>48</sup> however, evidence does exist that the Spaniards brought with them their

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<sup>48</sup>With the Pueblo Revolt in 1680, twenty-one Franciscan friars and more than 400 settlers were killed with the Indians destroying or sacking every Spanish building. The Spanish were forced to retreat southward to El Paso de Norte. An excellent discussion of the reasons for the revolt can be found in David J. Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) pp. 122-146. While the focus of this dissertation is on the religious art found in New Mexico and how that art reflects the Catholic Church in the region, much has been written on the success or lack of success of the transfer of the Spanish culture to the frontier. Works of particular interest include Ramón A. Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991); Edward Spicer, Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest, 1533-1960 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1962); Jack D. Forbes, Apache, Navaho, and Spaniard (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960); Cyrian Lynch, ed., Benavides' Memorial of 1630, trans. Peter P. Forrestal (Washington D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1954); Herbert E. Bolton, ed. Spanish Exploration in the Southwest, 1542-1706 (New York: Scribner's, 1961); Herbert E. Bolton, The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Latin American Colonies (El Paso, TX: Texas Western Press, 1962); H. Bailey Carroll and J. Villasana Haggard, eds. and trans., Three New Mexico Chronicles (Albuquerque: Quivera Society, 1942); Francis Bannon, The Spanish Borderlands

religious practices. The Franciscan historian Fray Angelico Chavez has done extensive research on the Marian image, *Nuestra Señora del Rosario, La Conquistadora*. The image's history as well as that of her confraternity can be traced to New Mexico before the Revolt of 1680.<sup>49</sup>

By the mid-eighteenth century in larger communities such as Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque there were various Franciscan Third Orders and confraternities. They were not so wealthy or so well organized as those in colonial Mexican cities, but they certainly performed the same functions: the care of a church or chapel altar and its images, sponsorship of procession, masses and other ceremonies, and the care of both spiritual and physical needs of its members and the community at large.<sup>50</sup>

Frontier, 1513-1821 (New York: Reinhardt and Winston, 1970); Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North America; John Kessell, Kiva, Cross, and Crown: The Pecos Indians and New Mexico, 1540-1840 (Washington D.C.: National Park Service, 1979); France V. Scholes, Church and State in New Mexico, 1610-1650 Historical Society of New Mexico, Publication in History, Vol 7 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1942); Henry W. Bowden, American Indian and Christian Missions: Studies in Cultural Conflict (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Marc Simmons, "The Pueblo Revolt: Why did it Happen?" El Palacio 86 (Winter 1980-81):11-15; and David Weber, The Idea of the Spanish Borderlands (New York: Garland Press, 1991).

<sup>49</sup>Fray Angelico Chavez, La Conquistadora: The Autobiography of an Ancient Statue, rev. ed. (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1983); Fray Angelico Chavez, Our Lady of the Conquest (Santa Fe: Historical Society of New Mexico, 1948).

<sup>50</sup>Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 42.

The Catholic Church that came to the New World with the conquistadores, then, was still very much a medieval church. The symbols, stories, dramas, images, miracles, saints, shrines, relics and processions that were so integral a part of the sixteenth-century Spanish Catholic tradition were carried to colonial Mexico intact.<sup>51</sup> Because of the Reconquest and its emphasis on regaining Spanish Catholic lands from the Muslim Moors, the medieval Catholicism of Spain did not weaken and change as had Catholic practice elsewhere in Europe. In fact, as historian Luis Weckmann writes, when the first conquistador landed in Mexico, Spain had "barely achieved the flowering of her medieval culture." And so Spanish colonists found themselves transplanting in colonial Mexico "institutions and values that were archetypical of the Middle Ages in full flower." In Mexico, then, "the waning of the Middle Ages" did not begin until the seventeenth-century.<sup>52</sup>

In New Mexico, it took even longer.

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<sup>51</sup>For a detailed analysis of the transfer of the Spanish church to colonial Mexico see Orlando Espin, "Tradition and Popular Religion: An Understanding of the *Sensus Fidelium*," in Frontier of Hispanic Theology in the United States, Ed. Allen Figueroa Deck, S.J. (Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), pp.68-69; Foster, Culture and Conquest; Phelan, The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans; Pious Barth, Franciscan Education and Social Order in Spanish North American, 1502-1821 (Chicago: n.p. 1950); and Ricard, The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico.

<sup>52</sup>Luis Weckmann, The Medieval Heritage of Mexico, trans. Frances M. Lopez-Morillas (New York: Fordham University Press, 1992), p.8.



## CHAPTER 2

### NEW MEXICAN RELIGIOUS ART AND TRADITIONS

Isolation is an important key to understanding the Spanish culture that was established and subsequently evolved in the New Mexico territory from its founding in 1598 to its annexation by the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. Located at the very end of a trade route which began in Mexico City and ended over 1200 miles away in Santa Fe, the Spanish population lived in virtual isolation. Fray Alonso de Benavides, Franciscan custos of the New Mexican mission, complained to Madrid that, "five or six years would pass without our knowing anything of the Spanish nation here in New Mexico...."<sup>1</sup> The Franciscans did operate mission supply caravans that traveled from Mexico City to several northern destinations including Santa Fe, but they were dispatched only once every three years during the 1600s. The wagon train and its military escort took three to four months to make the difficult trip.<sup>2</sup> Limited resources,

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<sup>1</sup>Alonso de Benavides, Benavides' Memorial of 1630. trans. Peter P. Forrestal, CSC. (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1954), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; Alvar W. Carlson, The Spanish-American Homeland: Four Centuries in New Mexico's Rio Arriba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 77; France V. Scholes, "The Supply Service of the New Mexico Missions in the Seventeenth Century," New Mexico Historical Review 5 (January 1930): 93-

long distances to travel and the constant fear of Indian attacks made the expense of goods hauled to the New Mexico mission very costly and therefore the Franciscans carried only those thought essential for the survival of the missions and their work.

The original group brought by Oñate in 1598 included 129 soldiers, some with their families, ten Franciscans (eight priests and two lay brothers), eighty-three wagons and 7,000 head of stock. They built a church at the first settlement site, San Juan de los Caballeros, in late 1598. The Spanish quickly fanned out, exploring the region in search of wealth. They found none. By late 1605, when it was clear that the region was not going to be the great economic addition hoped for by Spain, the Council of the Indies (the principal governing body of the Spanish Empire in America) began debating the fate of New Mexico. The Viceroy of Spain received an order to stop any further conquest in New Mexico. Only the friars would be allowed to make further explorations and these were solely for missionary purposes carried out without large complements of soldiers. In March 1608, ten years after first settlement and disappointed in the lack of wealth the decision to abandon New Mexico passed down through the chain of command. By the time the decision had reached Mexico City, the Franciscan Fray Lázaro Jiménez had also brought news of some successes in conversions. He argued that the number of Christian neophytes in the north was increasing

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115, (April 1930): 186-210, (October 1930): 386-404.

greatly and that New Mexico should not be abandoned. This information changed the King's mind and Spain decided not to abandon the new territory; instead, it would be turned into a royal province with the Crown footing the bill for its maintenance. This decision by Philip III (1598-1621) reinforced the power of the missionaries, and New Mexico remained to the end of Spain's control a monument to the crown's commitment to the spread of Christianity in spite of the region's lack of wealth.<sup>3</sup>

The original settlers of New Mexico came from various classes in Mexico and Spain. The Spanish frontiers were not settled by one homogeneous group. There was much intermarrying (between Spaniards and Indians) and the Spanish often sent Christianized Indians from central Mexico north to help hold a difficult frontier. It was also hoped that these Christianized Indians would serve as examples to the Indians still unconverted or only recently baptised. In Santa Fe, the church of San Miguel, one of the oldest churches in the region, was built across the river from the main settlement specifically for the use of the Tlascalcan Indians who accompanied the Spanish from central Mexico during the conquest of the region.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>John Francis Bannon, The Spanish Borderlands Frontier, 1513-1821 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp.36-42.

<sup>4</sup>Bannon, Spanish Borderlands, p. 6. As Bannon points out, "The Christianized Indians were an integral part of the Borderlands frontier, and this made the fusion process quite difficult and painful following the American take-over at the mid-nineteenth century." Christianized Indians were not distinguished from any other group by American settlers. Intermarriage with the Spaniards

The Spanish Mission system was a unique attempt by the Spanish to convert the Native Americans and settle the frontier regions. Friars were standard equipment on the frontiers of the Spanish empire. Ten Franciscans traveled with Oñate during the initial settlement of the New Mexico territory bringing the Catholic Church to the forefront of Spanish cultural settlement. According to Bannon, "Conversion and, if possible, assimilation of Native Americans was a Spanish aim of almost equal importance to wealth-gathering and other secular advantages."<sup>5</sup> This attitude accounts for the settlement pattern of the missionaries, with the Franciscans living at the Indian Missions and administering to the Spaniards as a secondary responsibility. The missionaries' main focus was the evangelization of the Indians and for this they were

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and later the Mexicans created a mixed-race population which the Anglo-American population saw as inferior both racially and politically. As Catholic Christians the Indians were no better than heathens.

<sup>5</sup>Bannon, Spanish Borderlands, p.5. On the Mission system see John Francis Bannon, ed., Bolton and the Spanish Borderlands (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964); Bannon, Spanish Borderlands; Herbert E. Bolton, "The Mission as a Frontier Institution in the Spanish American Colonies," in New Spain's Far Northern Frontier: Essays on Spain in the American West, 1540-1821, ed. David J. Weber (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1979), pp. 49-66; Herbert E. Bolton, ed. Spanish Exploration in the Southwest, 1542-1706 (New York: Scribner's, 1916). On Franciscan Evangelization to the Indians see Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came, pp. 46-66, 71-94; J. Manuel Espinosa, ed. and trans., The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696 and the Franciscan Missions in New Mexico: Letters of the Missionaries and Related Documents (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), pp. 14-29. On Spanish attempts to direct cultural change see Daniel S. Matson and Bernard L. Fontana, eds. and trans., Friar Brignas Reports to the King: Methods of Indoctrination on the Frontier of New Spain, 1796-97 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977).

maintained by the King's treasury. The secondary position of the Spanish population in the minds of the Franciscans affected the development of a popular church in the Spanish towns and villages as the people maintained their old traditions with limited priestly assistance.

Spaniards settled only small portions of New Mexico, generally along the streams and in the Upper Rio Grande Valley. Villages were few and far from one another. Santa Fe was founded in 1610 as the provincial capital, and only two additional towns were founded over the next century ( Santa Cruz de la Cañada in 1695 and Albuquerque in 1706). Hampered by isolation, insufficient personnel, inadequate financial support, a population scattered over a vast distance living in very small communities, and continued conflict with the civil government, the Catholic Church often struggled to maintain orthodoxy and to serve all of the Christians in the region.<sup>6</sup>

The Spanish New Mexican frontier was closely regulated by the government. The relationship of the village to provincial, vice-regal and regal centers of power ran along autocratic lines. The Crown made sure the villages had no local independence. With the exception of mayors in Santa Fe, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and Albuquerque, formal local government in the villages

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<sup>6</sup>Paul Kutsche, ed., The Survival of Spanish American Villages (Colorado Springs: Research Committee the Colorado College, 1979), p. 10; Marta Weigle, Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood: The Penitentes of the Southwest (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1976), p. 3; Carey McWilliams, North from Mexico (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 64.

was rare. Petitions from settlers went directly to the Governor. Non-governmental matters that needed to be settled were often decided by the patriarchs (heads of households) of the village by gathering in the cantina or after Sunday Mass. Outside of the Catholic church there was little formal organization of village government.<sup>7</sup> In this austere and unfriendly environment the Catholic church became a central, unifying, cohesive force in the culture.

The Franciscans had a monopoly on missionary activities in New Mexico. The friars were under the authority of the Franciscan Province of the Holy Gospel of Mexico. During its earliest years, 1598-1680 and 1692-1729, the New Mexico church was under missionary control.

Conflict between the civil government and settlers on one side and the missionaries on the other continually found the Indians pawns and exploited for their labor or tribute by rival factions. The Indians resenting the suppression of their religion staged sporadic uprisings beginning in 1640. Spanish reaction to the uprisings included whipping, imprisonment and hanging of the Indians caught. In 1643 and 1650 two particularly large plots were discovered with

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<sup>7</sup>Kutsche, Survival of Spanish American Village, p.10; Bannon, Spanish Borderlands, pp. 5-6.; George Mills, People of the Saints (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum, 1967), pp. 21-22; Espinosa, The Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1696, pp. 9-14. For a detailed look at the government of New Mexico in the seventeenth-century see France V. Scholes, "Civil Government and Society in New Mexico in the Seventeenth Century," New Mexico Historical Review 10 (1948):320-339; Scholes, Church and State in New Mexico; and for the eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries see Marc Simmons, Spanish Government in New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1968).

Jemez Indians joining the Pueblos in 1643 and the Pueblos of Jemez, Isleta, Alameda, San Felipe and Cochiti conspiring with the Apache in 1650. Put down, the leaders and participants in each incident were either hanged, imprisoned or sold into slavery.

In 1680, under the leadership of a San Juan medicine man, Po-pé, the Pueblo Indians with the help of the Apache planned to murder or expel all Spaniards and destroy Santa Fe. On August 9, two days before the planned uprising, loyal Indians told Governor Antonio de Otermín of the plan. Having been informed that their plan was uncovered, Po-pé called for the attack early on the morning of the 10th. North of Santa Fe, few Spaniards escaped with their lives and those near Santa Fe gathered in the capital for a final battle.

Surrounding the town the Indian leader sent the governor two crosses, one red and one white. If he returned the white one and promised to abandon the country, the Spaniards could go in peace. If he returned the red, the Spaniards meant to fight and the Indians threatened to massacre them all. The governor returned the red cross. The Indians cut off the water supply and began a siege. Early on the morning of August 20, a group of Spaniards attacked the sleeping Indians, killed 300, captured 47 and the remainder fled to the hills.

On August 21, thirteen years after the first settlement of New Mexico, approximately one thousand men, women and children abandoned Santa Fe and started towards El Paso del Norte to settle on the east bank of the Rio Grande (El

Paso, Texas). The Indians celebrated by destroying records, burning churches and washing baptised Indians in the Santa Fe River to cleanse them and to annul their Christian marriages.

Several unsuccessful attempts to reconquer the province occurred over the next ten years. In 1690, the Viceroy in Mexico City appointed Don Diego de Vargas Zapata Luján Ponce de León governor of New Mexico territory. On August 12, 1692 he set out from El Paso with three hundred men for the reconquest. The army reached Santa Fe on September 13th. Ten years of internal fighting among the tribes and the corruption of Po-pé found the Indians discontented. De Vargas demanded Santa Fe and while the Indians threatened to fight, they surrendered peacefully. With the exception of an encounter with the Apache, De Vargas met little opposition and did not lose a man in the reconquest.

In October of 1693, De Vargas led seventy families, one hundred soldiers and seventeen Franciscans back to New Mexico to reestablish the Spanish territory. In 1695 the Franciscans reestablished their missions and the *villa* (town) of Santa Cruz de la Cañada refounded. The Spaniards returned and would not leave the territory again.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>For the Story of the Revolt of 1680 see Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North American, pp. 133-141; Gutierrez, When Jesus Came, The Corn Mothers Went Away, pp. 87, 105, 107, 130-140, 151, 162-165, 255; Spicer, Cycles of Conquest; Forbes, Apache, Navaho and Spaniards; Kessell, Crown and Cross; Bowden, American Indian and Christian Missions; Simmons, "The Pueblo Revolt."



In 1729 the church in the New Mexico territory was brought under the control of the Bishop of Durango. Besides the distance ( well over 1200 miles) from the center of authority in Durango to Santa Fe, the age-old conflict between the Secular and Regular clergy began to divide the church.<sup>9</sup> There were petitions in the 1630s and 1730s to end the Franciscan monopoly in New Mexico by having a bishopric created in Santa Fe, but these requests were never granted.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Secular clergy "live in the world." They are clergy other than those who live in monasteries or a religious cloister. They owe their obedience to the bishop because of canon law rather than through a vow of obedience by which they renounced their own will. They practice celibacy but like laymen they can own private property. The Regular clergy are members of a religious order. They take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in addition to special vows sometimes required by particular orders. Regulars cannot own private property. They are members of a religious community and as such do not "live in the world." Relevant examples for this study would include the Franciscans and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). The religious hierarchy of the church resides in the Secular clergy. For further discussion see Matson, Friar Bringas, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup>1729 was the year New Mexico was attached to the Diocese of Durango. The power struggle between the ecclesiastical organization and the religious orders in New Mexico did not occur until 1797 when the *villa* churches (churches found in the Spanish towns) were secularized. Few Seculars wished to be sent to New Mexico due to the small population and poor parishes. While the Franciscans were not expelled during the Spanish period, they were not replaced when they left or died. In 1812 representative Pino reported to the Spanish Cortes that there were twenty-two Franciscan friars and two secular priests in the whole kingdom and Fr. Guevara reported in 1820 that he found twenty-three friars and four seculars. Mexican Independence in 1821, brought the expulsion of Franciscans born in Spain. The number of priests declined and their general conduct also suffered. In 1834 saw the secularization of the missions and they were placed under the control of the Bishop of Durango. The Mexican church, like the national government, was beset by financial and administrative problems and there was a shortage of secular priests. No replacements or supplies went to New Mexico. Bainbridge Bunting, Early Architecture in New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976), pp.4-5; Marta Weigle, Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood The Penitentes of the Southwest (Santa Fe:

Franciscan ideals and teachings permeated the New Mexican Catholic Church. The ideals of poverty, charity, and obedience formed the basis for their teachings. Their goal was to reconstruct Christian society and save souls through dedication to the example brought to earth by Christ. Their views greatly influenced the culture and world view of the New Mexican inhabitants. St. Francis' ideal of the renovation of European Christendom, a renewal of Christian principle based upon personal dedication to Christ and his example of humility and suffering, can be seen both in the teachings and the art of the Catholic Church in New Mexico. The Franciscans were the priests who taught New Mexicans the rudiments of faith and piety. They were the ones who instilled a reverence for important personages and encouraged active observance of the Holy days of the year. They provided the leadership and spiritual guidance and were the conveyors of traditions and dogma of the Catholic Church which provided formal structure to daily life. More importantly, their teachings were not challenged by any other Christians for over two hundred years.

The basic Christianity taught to the Indians and the Spanish in New Mexico is reflected in a textbook of religion, Doctrina Christiana, written by Don Fray Juan Zumárraga, O.F.M.(Order of Friars Minor) in 1546 and used by the New Mexican Franciscan missionaries. There were five primary sections to the

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Ancient City Press, 1976), pp. 21-24, 29; Marianne Louise Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts and Crafts in the American Southwest: appearance and processes" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1979), pp.591-592.

study: Things to Believe: the Apostles' Creed and the Articles of Faith; Things to be Observed: the Ten Commandments and Christian Law; Things to be Asked For: the Petitions of the Our Father; Things to be Done: the reception of the Sacraments, and Things to be Heard: the Mass and the sermons.<sup>11</sup>

Virtually all forms of Catholicism practiced in colonial Mexico were also followed in New Mexico. As the Spanish moved north, they were accompanied by Franciscan missionaries bringing with them their philosophies on conversion and Catholic society. They brought with them the celebration of the *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross), the methodical practice of the Holy Rosary, many of the same confraternities, the central importance of Holy Week and the practices of self-mortification for penance. The Franciscans also brought with them their Christ-centered, Passion-centered spirituality.<sup>12</sup> In 1760, Bishop Tamaron noted two Confraternities in Santa Fe, *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, *La Conquistadora* (Our Lady of the Rosary, the Conquest), and *Santisimo Sacramento* (Holy Sacrament). He also approved a petition presented by Governor Francisco Antonio Marin del Valle for a new confraternity dedicated to the Marian

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<sup>11</sup>Wroth, *Christian Images*, pp. 37-38; Barth, *Franciscan Education*, p. 67.

<sup>12</sup>Wroth, *Images of Penance*, pp. 32, 42-43; Thomas J. Steele, "The Spanish Passion Play in New Mexico and Colorado," *New Mexico Historical Review* 53 (July, 1978):240; Gutiérrez, *When Jesus Came*, pp. 77-94; Weber, *Spanish Frontier in North America*, pp. 92-121; Espinosa, *Saints in the Valley*, pp. 9-27; and Barth, *Franciscan Education*, pp. 145-150.

advocation, *Nuestra Señora de la Luz* (Our Lady of Light).<sup>13</sup> In 1776, Fray Francisco Domínguez noted in his report on the mission of New Mexico the existence of seven confraternities: the three mentioned above in Santa Fe, the Confraternity of Poor Souls located in Albuquerque, and three, *Nuestra Señora del Carmen*, *San Miguel* and *Santisimo Sacramento* (Our Lady of Carmel, Saint Michael, and Holy Sacrament) found in Santa Cruz de la Cañada.<sup>14</sup>

The color, pagantry, and mystery of the liturgical rituals, and the dramatic character of the ceremonies the people carried with them into this sometimes forbidding territory tied them to their homeland. Through generations of isolation, the customs, habits, and folk traditions of the people changed little. By the late eighteenth-century, the Spanish church in New Mexico still reflected

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<sup>13</sup>Wroth, *Images of Penance*, p. 42; Chavez, *La Conquistadora, The Autobiography*, pp. 68-70.

<sup>14</sup>Fray Francisco Atansio Domínguez, *The Mission of New Mexico*, with other contemporary Documents, trans. and eds. Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angelico Chavez (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1956), pp. 15, 29. In 1776, Fray Domínguez paid an official canonical visit on behalf of the Province of the Holy Gospel of Franciscan Observants of New Spain to the Custody of the Conversion of St Paul. The custody consisted of El Paso del Rio del Norte with one Spanish *villa* and four Indian Pueblos and the Kingdom of New Mexico with three Spanish *villas* and twenty-two Indian Pueblos. Domínguez's work is the single most important document on the Catholic church and its arts for eighteenth-century New Mexico.

the traditions brought to the region two centuries earlier by the original settlers.<sup>15</sup>

Before the 1680 Revolt, missionaries built churches and decorated them with imported religious art. However, after the Reconquest in 1692 and on into the eighteenth-century, the building of churches and chapels was initiated by civil authorities rather than churchmen in Spanish towns. Prior to the Revolt, the Catholic church was the only formal organization in New Mexico. Civil government was limited to mayors in the *villas* of Santa Fe and Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Indian labor was used to build the churches and the clergy organized and supervised the projects. After the conquest, power was more evenly distributed with civil authorities maintaining the Spanish communities, which included the building of their own churches and using their own labor. This change can be seen as early as 1692 with General de Vargas' order to repair San

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<sup>15</sup>Jose Edmundo Espinosa, Saints in the Valley: Christian Sacred Images in the History, Life and Folk Art of Spanish New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1960), n.p.; Mills, People of the Saints, pp. 21-22. On isolation in late eighteenth-century New Mexico see D. W. Meinig, Southwest: Three Peoples in Geographical Change 1600-1970 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 120; Richard Nostrand, The Hispano Homeland (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), pp. 46-48; George Kubler, Santos: An Exhibition of the Religious Folk Art of New Mexico (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1964), pp. 1, 4, 6, 8. While the Enlightenment and Bourbon reforms were being felt in Mexico by the late 1700s as seen in the deemphasis on self-mortification and public penitential processions, it by no means died out and continued within approved Church discipline as a highly regulated practice. It continued among the people as a popular public display of penance in unlicensed activities of individuals and brotherhoods. This was particularly true in New Mexico well into the twentieth-century and will be discussed later in greater depth. Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 34-36.

Miguel in Santa Fe and his 1703 order to build a church in Santa Fe for the friars. Unlike pre-Revolt New Mexico, the Spanish composed the building crews. This tradition was carried on with the *Santuario de Chimayo* and other chapels of the early nineteenth-century that were being built or repaired by private citizens.<sup>16</sup>

Generally, there were few materials at hand to build the churches. There were sun-dried adobes, undressed ledge stone, and hand-hewn timbers. The Franciscans devised a style which began in old El Paso and extended into New Mexico and persisted for some 250 years. It was a hybrid of Romanesque and Mauresque (Moorish) features, and employed aboriginal adobe and rubble construction methods quite unlike the Spanish colonial religious architecture in New Spain, California, Florida, or Texas.<sup>17</sup> The isolation of New Mexico becomes apparent in the religious art. Interior furnishings were few: an altar usually of adobe, one to three adobe shelves or steps which held candles or ornaments, the Tabernacle which ran above and behind the altar, two niches above the Tabernacle which contained the crucifix and an image of the mission's

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<sup>16</sup>George Kubler, The Religious Architecture of New Mexico in the Colonial Period and Since the American Occupation (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1940; reprint ed., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), pp. 138-139.

<sup>17</sup>E. Boyd, Popular Arts of Spanish New Mexico (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1974), p. 48.

patron saint, a wooden pulpit shaped like a goblet which rose on a pillar from the earthen floor and sometimes one or two paintings or a few little engravings.<sup>18</sup>

George Kubler commented upon the isolation of New Mexico and its effect upon the religious architecture of the region noting the gradual simplification and reduction of style of the arts on New Mexico. The older traditional art survived but in a much simplified form without any movement towards a refinement of regional style. Changes in design which affected the metropolitan centers of the Spanish world passed New Mexico by.<sup>19</sup>

The art found in the churches initially came from Spain and Mexico. In Pre-Revolt New Mexico, the King funded the purchase of art for the Indian missions. With the Reconquest and the return of the Spanish, imported art became less and less affordable as the cost of goods increased.<sup>20</sup> The religious art found in the Spanish colonies, including New Mexico during the late seventeenth-century was most commonly polychromed wood. Much of it was free standing and used in either churches or for religious processions. For Spanish Baroque artists the work needed to be as realistic as possible. They used

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<sup>18</sup>Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 48.

<sup>19</sup>Kubler, Religious Architecture, pp.135-136; Bunting, Early Architecture, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup>Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts," p. 556; John Dillenberger, The Visual Arts and Christianity in America: From the Colonial Period to the Present Expanded edition (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 1989), p. 26.

glass eyes, real lashes, and real costumes. This realism was taken to an extreme in Mexico and New Mexico with the addition of human teeth, fingernails, and exposed ribs and shin bones to produce bloody Passion figures that shocked the beholder. In New Mexico the church and processional figures continued to be made with carved hands and faces but as time went on the bodies were left plain for dressing or were hollowed out and had a framework skirt wrapped with cloth.<sup>21</sup>

The mid-to-late eighteenth-century was a period of transition in New Mexican religious art. Distance, the lack of trained artists, the lack of proper tools and examples led to the creation of religious art with a decidedly traditional style. The local artists were extremely dependent on popular prints and small devotional images for iconography and composition, but Christian art in New Mexico was not simply the work of backward unskilled rural people who were ignorant or incapable of "high" art styles. It was the continuation of long known styles that changed in form but not substance.<sup>22</sup> George Kubler argues that

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<sup>21</sup>Robert L. Shalkop, Reflections of Spain: A Comparative View of Spanish Colonial Sculpture (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum of Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1968), p. 16; Wroth, Christian Images, p. 32.

<sup>22</sup>Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts," pp. 575-576; Wroth, Christian Images, p. 25; E. Boyd, The Literature of Santos (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1950), pp. 3, 12-13; Dillenberger, Visual Arts, pp. 21-22; Christine Mather, Colonial Frontiers: Art and Life in Spanish Colonial New Mexico: The Fred Harvey Collection (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1983), pp.7-12; Mitchell Wilder and Edgar Breitenbach, Santos: The Religious Folk Art of New Mexico (Colorado Springs: The Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1943), pp. 21-23; Thomas J. Steele, Santos and Saints: The



New Mexican Christian art was the end result of the survival and rural maintenance of the sculptural styles of the Andalusian masters Juan Martinez Montañes and Pedro de Mean and the painting style of the much copied Murillo.<sup>23</sup> Like the extensively copied art works of the Spaniards Murillo and Montañes, found in Mexico, New Mexican art showed the same tendency towards subjects of penance and mercy. Like the devotional works of Spain and Mexico, New Mexican devotional art displayed the singular personage against a blank background with the attributes of Christ, the Virgin, or the patron saint surrounding the image. The Franciscans continued to influence the subject of the art, with their focus on the Holy Family, the Trinity, the Man of Sorrows, Our Lady of Sorrows, Our Lady of Solitude, the Crucifixion, Jesus the Nazarene, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of Padua. Life-size statues of the Nazarene, of Our Lady of Sorrows and the Crucifixion occupied most Franciscan missions. They were reminders of the sacrifice of Jesus, and missionaries wanted to remind all of the penance demanded for that sacrifice.<sup>24</sup>

Religious Folk Art of Hispanic New Mexico (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1974), pp. 10, 26; Gabrielle Palmer and Donna Pierce, Cambios: The Spirit of Transformation in Spanish Colonial Art (Albuquerque: Santa Barbara Museum of Art and University of New Mexico Press, 1992), p. 105.

<sup>23</sup>Kubler, Santos: An Exhibition, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup>Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 48-50, 52, 58; Wroth, Christian Images, pp. 112-113; Shalkop, Reflections I, pp.10-13; Schiller, Iconography of Passion, p. 190; Juan Alfaro, "The Spirit of the First Franciscan Missionaries in Texas," U.S. Catholic Historian 9 (Spring 1990):56.

By the 1770s locally produced sculptures, paintings, altar screens, and other religious art dominated the churches, chapels and homes. Two prominent artists were Fray Andrés García and Captain Bernardo Miera y Pacheco. Fray García, a Franciscan priest, born in Puebla, Mexico, served in New Mexico from 1748 to 1778. He produced sculpture, altar pieces and church furniture for the churches he served in Santa Cruz de la Cañada, Santa Fe and Albuquerque. Miera y Pacheco was born in Spain and arrived in Santa Fe around 1756 and remained until 1785. He also left significant numbers of paintings and sculptures. While both of these men were influential in initiating the tradition of *santo-making* (saint-making) in New Mexico, their art was derived from the European baroque tradition. The importance of these men lies in the fact that they served as transitional artists between earlier Spanish baroque masters and the later stylistically mature artists of New Mexico who came to the fore at the turn of the century.<sup>25</sup>

There were three major classifications of New Mexican Religious art: *retablos*, *bultos*, and skin paintings. The *retablos* are paintings on gesso-coated pine panels painted in tempera; *bultos* are figures carved in the round usually of cottonwood; and skin paintings are just that, paintings on the hides of animals in tempera. A *retablo* was also defined in English as an altar piece or altar screen,

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<sup>25</sup>Palmer and Pierce, Cambios, p. 105; Larry Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints: Religious Art of New Mexico, 1780-1907 (Santa Fe: Red Crane Books, 1992), p. 13; Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 96-98, 102, 109-110.

which could in fact be made up of several separate paintings placed against the wall behind the altar.<sup>26</sup>

The subjects of all styles of religious art of eighteenth-century New Mexico reflected both the earlier-mentioned Franciscan tradition and the Christocentric Catholicism of the late medieval Spanish church. Subjects included Christ washing the feet of the Disciples, the Crucifix with mourning figures at the foot of the Cross, the Crucifix with the instruments of the Passion, Our Lady of Solitude, Our Lady of Sorrows, the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Remedies, Our Lady of Carmel, Our Lady of Light and the colonial Mexican Our Lady of Guadalupe.<sup>27</sup>

The best artistic example, which can still be seen today, of the religious art of the late eighteenth-century is the *reredos* (altar screen) from *La Castrense* (the military chapel) in Santa Fe built by Governor Francisco Antonio Marin del Valle and his wife, Maria Ignacia Martinez de Ugarte for the Virgin Mary, Our

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<sup>26</sup>Espinosa, *Saints in the Valley*, p. 51; Gloria Kay Giffords, *Mexican Folk Retablos: Masterpieces on Tin* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), pp. 20, 26-28, 30-32, 34; On Painting on hides See Boyd, *Popular Arts*, pp. 118, 125, 128; Mather, *Colonial Frontier*, pp. 14, 16-17; Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts," pp. 562-565; On gesso relief and bulto art see Boyd, *Popular Arts*, pp. 145, Espinosa, *Saints in the Valley*, p. 4; and Wilder and Breitenback, *Santos*, pp. 24-28, 44.

<sup>27</sup>Boyd, *Popular Arts*, pp. 130-138, 152-154; Wroth, *Christian Images*, pp. 48-50. There are also any number of saints depicted on both gesso relief panels and tanned hides. Not surprisingly, a number of them are Franciscans: St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Dominic. Others depicted are Ignatius Loyola, John Nepomuk, John the Baptist, Veronica's Veil Image and the Archangels Gabriel and Michael and St. Joseph with the Christ child.

Lady of Light.<sup>28</sup> In 1760 the Confraternity of Our Lady of Light petitioned and received approval from the Bishop of Durango to organize, and in the old Spanish tradition, the founders built a chapel (*La Castrense*) for its members.

Don Francisco Antonio Marin was governor of New Mexico from 1756 to 1760. Little is known of him except his gift of the chapel and its magnificent *reredos*.<sup>29</sup> The confraternity members took a pledge to defend the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, and to honor the Virgin on the Feast of Our Lady of Light, May 21; to have a Mass said for the dead brethren on May 22; to have a Mass and procession with indulgences and remission of all sins for all who participated on August 15; and finally to honor the Virgin as Our Lady of Valvanera on September 10.<sup>30</sup>

By 1776 differences began appearing between the frontier church in Santa Fe and the church in Durango. The population in New Mexico was already showing the tendency to change church rules to fit their particular needs.

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<sup>28</sup>John L. Kessell, The Missions of New Mexico Since 1776 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980), pp. 44-48.

<sup>29</sup>*Reredos* and *retablos* denote the screen found beyond the altar table. It was usually decorated with biblical scenes or saintly figures. *Retablo* stems from "retro-tabulum" behind the altar (table). *Reredos* stems from "rere-dorsum" rising back of or reared behind. In the Spanish church incredibly ornate *reredos* and *retablos* were common. This *La Castrense reredos* became the example for later New Mexican artists to follow. While not working in stone the artists maintained the style of this piece in their works. Pal Kelemen, "The Significance of the stone retablo of Cristo Rey," El Palacio 61 (August 1954):244.

<sup>30</sup>Eleanor B. Adams, "The Chapel and Cofradia of Our Lady of Light in Santa Fe," New Mexico Historical Review Vol XXII #4 (October 1947):327-331.

Generally, it was against church policy for the Host (Eucharistic Bread) to be taken from the parish church in procession. Exceptions existed as in the case of the celebration of Corpus Christi. In New Mexico, the people tended to expose the Host in processions whenever they wanted the power of God to help them, which was often. When the Host was exposed, against all orthodox church policy, in the August 15 procession of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Light, Fray Dominguez disapproved:

. . .indulgence of August 15 has been considered a jubilee in this kingdom. As a result. . .the Most Divine Eucharistic Bread was taken in procession from the Parish church to this chapel until sunset so that the obligations to win the aforesaid indulgence might be performed. The Our Best Sun, Light, and Love, returned in procession of His house, or tabernacle. I immediately opposed this abuse and illegal practice.<sup>31</sup>

This was not the first, nor would it be the last time the Catholic church in New Mexico would be instructed to return to correct church policy and would ignore the instruction. Already the New Mexican church with its small number of priests, and agrarian, illiterate population was redefining church rules to fit their particular perceived needs.

The Confraternity of Our Lady of Light, founded principally for citizens of Santa Fe, did not exclude those from the provinces. Women could belong, to the extent that their names could be recorded in the *Libro de Congregantes*, but they were not allowed to attend meetings or to take an active part in the

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<sup>31</sup>Dominguez, *Missions*, p. 37.

confraternity's affairs.<sup>32</sup> While the Franciscans dominated the region, the Jesuits were extremely active in colonial Mexico, Sonora, and Arizona until they were expelled from the Spanish empire in 1767. Religious orders tended to leave each other alone in their regions of missionary work.<sup>33</sup> It seems that the Governor of New Mexico preferred Jesuits to Franciscans and the Governor's wife was named for Ignatius Loyola.<sup>34</sup> While it has been hypothesized that Marin was educated by the Jesuits, certainly his decision to establish a confraternity to Our Lady of Light, as well as the placement of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. John Nepomuk on the *reredos*, reflects a devotion to the Jesuits. It has not been documented as to who chose the subjects for the *reredos* but there is only one Franciscan depicted, St Francis Solano, and the patroness of the chapel, Our Lady of Light, was a favorite of the Jesuits.<sup>35</sup> This would lead one to believe that the Governor and his wife had the final say in subjects rather than the Franciscan priests in Santa Fe.

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<sup>32</sup>Adams, "Chapel, Our Lady of Light," pp. 327-331.

<sup>33</sup>Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," pp. 254-255. Disagreements between the Spanish King, Rome and the Jesuits led to the expulsion of the order from the entire Spanish empire. Jesuit missions in Sonora and Arizona were left unattended for many years after the expulsion due to a lack of priests to attend them.

<sup>34</sup>Steele, Santos and Saints, p. 8.

<sup>35</sup>For a discussion of the advocacy of Our Lady of Light See Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," pp. 243-272; Giffords, Mexican Folk Retablos, p. 54; and Cassidy, Land of Mary, pp. 166-167.

*Nuestra Señora de la Luz* (Our Lady of Light) was a "new" aspect of Mary. A holy nun from Palmero, Italy, in the 1730s dreamt of a visit from the Virgin Mary during which the Virgin instructed the nun to have a painting made of the Virgin carrying the Christ child in her left arm, and with her right hand lifting a soul in the form of a terrified man, out of the grasp of the devil portrayed as a dragon. The Christ child was to hold a flaming heart (symbolizing Christian devotion) taken from the basket held by an angel. Above Mary's head, two angels held a crown, and cherubs were grouped under her feet. This Mary was the Virgin of mercy with the aim of moving men's hearts to greater piety. According to legend, the Virgin, through a series of dreams, posed for this painting so the nun might relate the content to the artist.<sup>36</sup>

Ideas and themes have a tendency to change as different artists attempt to portray the subject. The changes which occur with the movement of this particular aspect of the Virgin (Our Lady of Light) highlights this tendency and illuminates the kinds of changes that would be seen in New Mexico in many other kinds of religious art. The original work was an oil painting (Figure 2.1). The Jesuit order was responsible for bringing the veneration of Our Lady of Light to Mexico and in 1737, a Mexican copy of the painting appeared and by the mid-eighteenth-century Mexico had a flourishing market for woodcuts and engravings based on the original work (Figure 2.2). A woodcut of the engraving

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<sup>36</sup>Giffords, *Mexican Retablos*, p. 54; Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," p. 257.

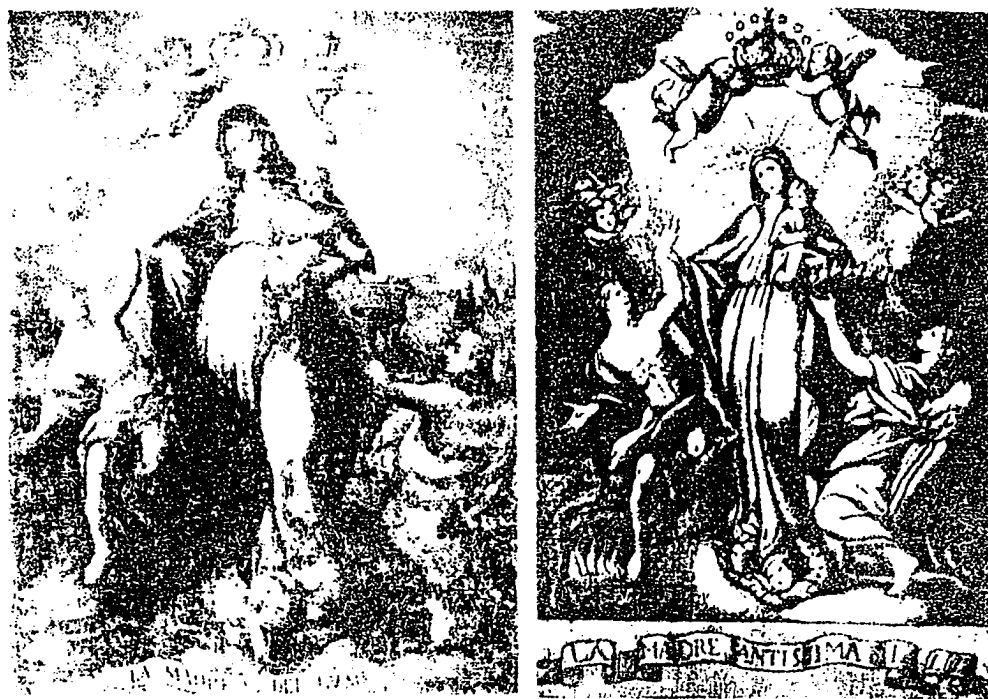


Figure 2.1, 2.2 Our Lady of Light (left), original oil painting from Palermo, Italy. Our Lady of Light, Mexican copy from mid-eighteenth-century. In Keleman, "The Significance of the stone retablo of Cristo Rey."





Figure 2.3, 2.4 Our Lady of Light (left), woodcut frontpiece of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Light Constitution. Historical Society of New Mexico Papers, NMSCRA, Santa Fe. Our Lady of Light (right), the carved stone relief found in niche of the *reredòs* of *La Casrense*. Photo Courtesy of the Liturgical Arts Society.

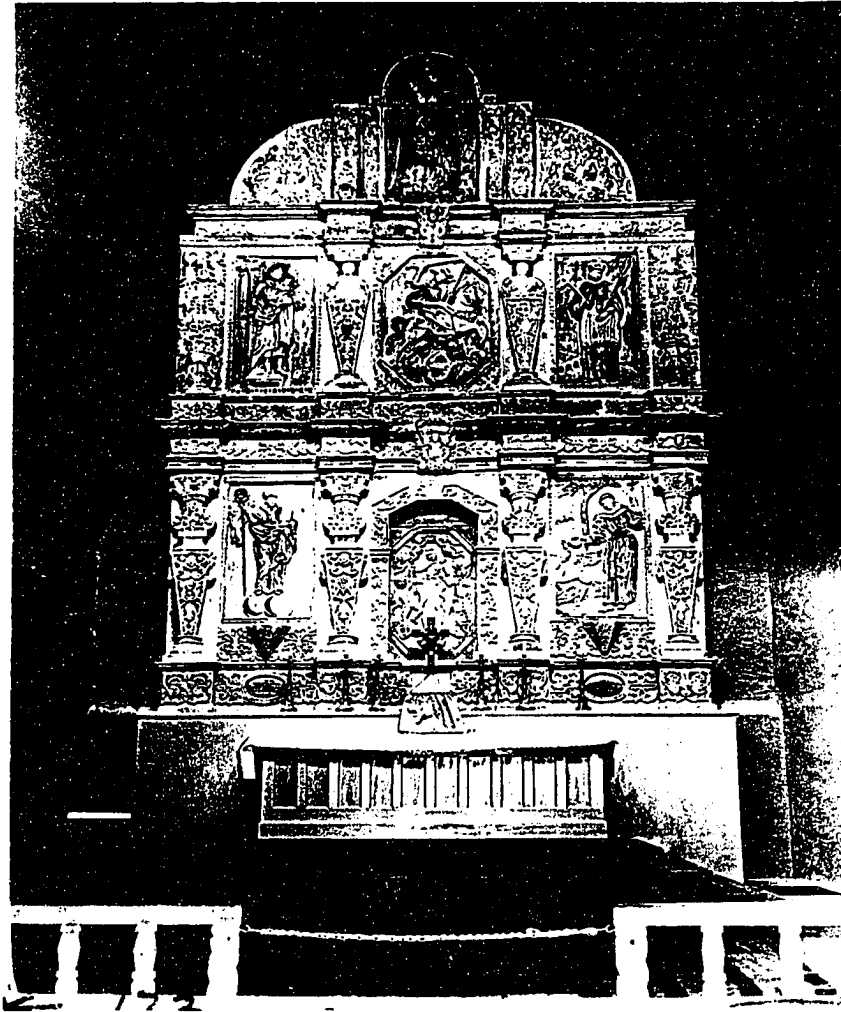


Figure 2.5 *Reredos of La Castrense* with the stone relief of Our Lady of Light.  
Photo Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 19656.

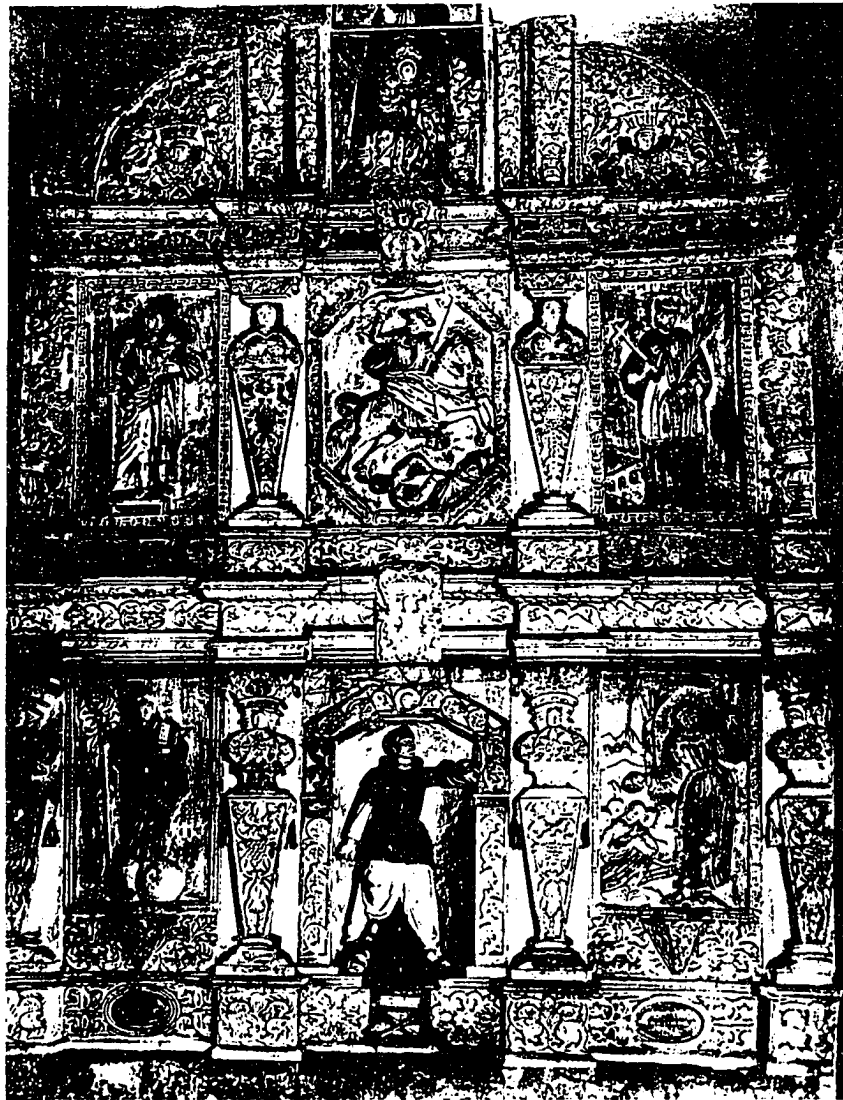


Figure 2.6 *Reredos of La Castrese* with Our Lady of Light replaced by a *bulto*. Taken in 1934 while the *reredos* was still in the *Parroquia* of the Cathedral. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 8483.

was used as the frontpage for the Constitution of the Confraternity in Santa Fe (Figure 2.3) and this woodcut was in turn used as the pattern for the stone *retable* of the Our Lady of Light *reredos* of *La Castrense* (Figure 2.4).<sup>37</sup>

The *reredos* itself reflects the Spanish church in New Mexico and the transitional state of the art from a provincial Baroque style (already out of date in the metropolitan centers) to the purely New Mexican *santero* (a saint maker) style of the turn of the century (Figures 2.5, 2.6). The structural design with the framework around each of the figures is reminiscent of sixteenth-century European design and seventeenth-century Mexican designs which only reached New Mexico in the late eighteenth century. At the very top of the carved stone *reredos* is the Image of God the Father. He wears a papal tiara and in His left hand holds an orb, the symbol of sovereignty, and His right hand is raised in a gesture of benediction.<sup>38</sup> The panel below is of a *retable* of *Nuestra Señora de Valvanera* (Our Lady of Valvanera). This advocation is from the Lograno department in Northern Spain. Our Lady is depicted with the Christ child on her lap and they sit in the middle of a tree. Both figures are crowned.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," p. 260. For other examples of the use of graphic arts in the passing on of ideas see Boyd, *Popular Arts*, pp. 78, 80.

<sup>38</sup>This representation of God the Father is seen frequently on Spanish colonial altars and it survives into the eighteenth-century particularly where the decoration was entrusted to regional artisans. Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," p. 248.

<sup>39</sup>Our Lady of Valvanera can be traced back to the tenth century. Originally a Romanesque statuette, the Virgin rests on four eagles. She holds a heart-shaped apple in her left hand and the Christ child, in her lap, holds a book. By

Below the panel of Our Lady of Valvanera is a tier of three panels. On the left is St Joseph with the Infant Christ child. This scene became particularly important during the Counter Reformation as the Catholic Church attempted to answer criticism with an emphasis on the family. In Spanish Counter-Reformation art, Joseph was usually portrayed as a younger man with a dark beard and upright carriage. In Christian art, Joseph's flowering staff of almond wood is a symbol of divine approval. In the center of this tier is the Apostle, St. James the Greater (Santiago). St. James is the patron saint of Spain and of the military. He is carved in the aspect popular throughout colonial America, mounted on his white charger leading Spanish troops into battle, a symbol of conquest. On the right of this tier is St. John Nepomuk. Although he is not a Spanish saint, he is found in areas of Jesuit influence. He was the patron of Bohemia, and protector of the Jesuit Order. He was martyred when he refused to break the sanctity of the confessional.<sup>40</sup>

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the seventeenth-century, she has no attributes and is found inside of a tree. The cult spread to the New World and it is astonishing to find her in Santa Fe since she was a favorite of the Benedictines, who were not found in this region. It is not surprising to find the statue of the Virgin found in the tree. It is a common legend in Spain and is associated with a number of Our Ladies. Kelemen, "Cristo Rey," p. 249; and Bernard L. Fontana, "Nuestra Señora de Valvanera in the Southwest," in Hispanic Arts and Ethnohistory in the Southwest, ed. Marta Weigle (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1983), 81-92.

<sup>40</sup>Butler's Lives of the Saints, ed. with additional material by Michael Walsh (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), pp. 254-256.

The bottom tier on the left depicts Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order. He is seen standing on two globes, carrying a standard and a book inscribed with the motto of his order: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* (for the greater glory of God). In the center was found the *retablo* described above of Our Lady of Light and seen in Figure 2.4. On the right was the only Franciscan, Francis Solano. He was known as the Apostle of South America. In his left hand he holds aloft a crucifix and his right holds a shell above a group of half-naked indians symbolizing baptism.<sup>41</sup> According to Thomas J. Steele, S.J., the Governor was named for this saint and therefore his presence in the *reredos* is not surprising.<sup>42</sup>

In this work we find saints revered through the ages next to saints only recently canonized. The representation of the Virgin of the ancient tradition (Our Lady of Valvanera) is juxtaposed with one of the latest cults (Our Lady of Light) and St. James the Apostle contrasted against St. Francis Solano representing South American missions point out the old and the new. This combining of traditions is unique to this *reredos* and not found in other New

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<sup>41</sup>Detailed descriptions of the *reredos* of *La Castrense* can be found in a number of works. The best are Pal Kelemen, Vanishing Art of the America (New York: Walker, 1971), pp. 57-59; Adams, "Chapel, Our Lady of Light," pp. 327-341; and A. von Wuthenau, "The Spanish military chapel of Santa Fe and the *reredos* of Our Lady of Light," New Mexico Historical Review 10 (1935):175-194.

<sup>42</sup>Steele, Santos and Saints, p. 8.

Mexican works.<sup>43</sup> In most of the religious art found in New Mexico, saints of non-Franciscan subjects are not found. St. Ignatius Loyola, St. John Nepomuk and St. Francis Xavier are only found in *La Castrense* in the eighteenth-century.<sup>44</sup>

There was other art in the Chapel itself. Along the walls of the nave Fray Domínguez noted thirteen paintings, one of Our Lady of Valvanera and twelve of the Apostles. In the sacristy there was a twenty-four-inch statute of Our Lady of Light, a medium sized oil painting of Our Lady of Light, and two small statues, one of St Joseph and the other of the Franciscan, Anthony of Padua, which was made in Madrid.<sup>45</sup> Above the door facing north was a white stone medallion with Our Lady of Light in half relief. In the transept were two altars that faced the nave of the chapel. On the right was Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception and on the left was Francis Xavier (a devoted disciple of Loyola).<sup>46</sup>

The advocations of Mary found in this chapel are typical of the Spanish church in transition during the eighteenth century. The old advocacy as Our

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<sup>43</sup>Kelemen, Vanishing Arts, p. 61.

<sup>44</sup>St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier make a reappearance in New Mexico after American conquest when the new Bishop, John Baptiste Lamy invites the Jesuits into the territory to set up schools and administer to the people in Albuquerque and surrounding area.

<sup>45</sup>Dominguez, Missions, p. 35.

<sup>46</sup>Dominguez, Missions, pp. 33, 35. In 1859, the relief of Our Lady of Light was given by Bishop Lamy to the Loretto Sisters for their new Academy of Our Lady of Light and they placed it above the entrance to their adobe convent.

Lady of Valvanera with the Christ child on her lap, the portrayal of Mary as the Immaculate Conception and the "new" cult of Our Lady of Light all address the issues of penance and mercy that were being taught and had been taught by the Franciscans in the Spanish towns for many years. The Immaculate Conception strongly supported by the Franciscans and her focus on penance and prayer and Our Lady of Light with her focus on mercy and the saving of souls are examples of two representations of the Virgin advocating the same goals. Their purpose was to call man from his sinful ways.<sup>47</sup>

This *reredos* was the only example within hundreds of miles of what E. Boyd called "Pomp and Circumstance," the attempt at an ornate handcarved stone *reredo* in two-dimensional relief reminiscent of the baroque art of an earlier period. It was to become a pattern for later painted wooden altarpieces.<sup>48</sup> Within the confines of wood and paint, the altars at Acoma, Laguna and others follow the plan of the *reredos* of Our Lady of Light, including the pilasters, capitals, pediments, and panels. After Franciscans left and laymen were

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<sup>47</sup>In her many advocations, the Virgin was the true patroness of the New World. With her appearance to Juan Diego in 1531 as Our Lady of Guadalupe, she gave aid to the Indian as well as the white man. Her protection was sought by cities, villages, families, and businesses. She was venerated in countless churches, chapels and family oratorios. Many of her advocations have European origins, with others of local origin gaining great popularity. See Christine Mather, Baroque to Folk: an exploration of the links between the fine arts of the baroque and emerging folk arts of the colonies of the Iberian peninsula (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press for Museum of International Folk Art, 1980).

<sup>48</sup>Dillenberger, Visual Arts, p. 29; Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts," pp. 587-588; and Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 60.



responsible for the design of the altars, the *reredos* design continued, but with much greater simplicity.<sup>49</sup>

On February 21, 1821, a young officer by the name of Agustín de Iturbide declared Mexico's independence from Spain. In New Mexico this incident caused a minimal stir. New Mexico had always been far from the center of power and political independence.<sup>50</sup> The Spanish borderlands became the Mexican borderlands. Earlier economic reforms instituted by the Bourbons in the eighteenth-century had opened up trade inside the empire for New Mexico,<sup>51</sup> but with independence the Mexican government abolished the remaining restrictions on trade which had handicapped the region, and opened the way for increased trade between New Mexico and the United States, particularly along the Santa Fe Trail.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Boyd, Literature of Santos, p. 9.

<sup>50</sup>Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came, pp. 337-338.

<sup>51</sup>Gutiérrez, When Jesus Came, pp. 298-336.

<sup>52</sup>For works dealing with New Mexico and the Mexican period see David J. Weber, The Mexican Frontier, 1821-1846: The American Southwest Under Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); David J. Weber, "From Hell Itself The Americanization of Mexico's Northern Frontier," In Myth and the History of the Hispanic Southwest, David J. Weber (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988): 105-116; Lansing B. Bloom, "New Mexico under Mexican Administration, 1821-1846," Old Santa Fe I #1 (1913): 31-49, #2 (1913): 131-175, #3 (1913): 235-287, #4 (1913): 347-368, II #1 (1915): 3-56, #2 (1915): 119-169, #3 (1915): 223-277, #4 (1915): 349-380; and Carlson, Spanish American Homeland, pp. 78-80.

For the Catholic Church in Mexico, however - and in New Mexico - independence created great strife. The church had been split during the Mexican revolution over independence with the official hierarchy of the Church, supported by the Papacy, siding with the King and opposing Mexican independence. There were some parish priests who favored independence. With independence, clergy loyal to Spain found themselves expelled. This meant that many of the Franciscan missionaries in New Mexico left. By 1822 only four bishops remained in Mexico and by 1827 only one remained in the Mexican city of Puebla. When he died in 1829, Mexico had no bishops and the farthest points of the country were neglected by the church hierarchy. During this period, the Catholic church in New Mexico was short of funds, weak in leadership, and failed to fill the void of departing Franciscans. The priests who did occupy the territory neglected the spiritual welfare of the citizens, seldom travelling outside of the towns to say Mass, perform marriages, hear confession and bury the dead. Churches and residences were in deplorable condition, some without even the necessary implements to say Mass.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Eugene W. Shiels, "Church and State in the First Decade of Mexican Independence, Catholic Historical Review XXVIII (July, 1942): 206-228; Weber, Mexican Frontier, p. 77; Simmons, "Spanish Exiles," pp. 67-79; Connie Cortazar, "The Santa Vista of Agustín Fernández de San Vicente to New Mexico, 1826," New Mexico Historical Review 59 (January 1984): 33-35; John Gilmary Shea, A History of the Catholic Church: Within the Limits of the United States: 1844-1866 (Rahway, N.J.:Mershon Company Press, 1892), pp.298-303, and Dolan, American Catholic Experience, p. 30.

The dissolution of the mission system and the decay of official church life did not, however, end frontier Catholicism. Into the breach stepped the laymen of the territory for whom Franciscan medieval spirituality was still uppermost, and for whom the Good Friday Passion, and death of Christ were still the focus of the sacred year. With the continued loss of the Franciscans and with few secular replacements coming from Durango, members of the old, fragmented Confraternities began filling the void.

These Confraternities or Brotherhoods,<sup>54</sup> remembering the traditions of their past, continued the Passion plays and processions as a way of maintaining their spiritual focus. The New Mexican Hispanics had no intention of letting their culture die. The penitente movement exemplified the vitality of the culture and its desire to continue the traditions of the past.<sup>55</sup>

Formed outside of the hierarchical structure of the Roman Church, the local structure of the Brotherhoods adjusted to fill the needs of the villages. These Brotherhoods were known by many names. The best known was *Hermanidad de Nuestro Padre Jesus de Nazareno* (Brotherhood of Our Father Jesus the Nazerene). As Nancie Gonzalez found in her study of Spanish-

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<sup>54</sup>The Confraternities in New Mexico were never very strong and had difficulty remaining solvent. Most had stopped meeting by the 1820s and 1830s. With the need in the community for assistance men would gather on the model of the old Confraternities and try to solve community problems like burial of dead, care of widows and orphans, feeding the hungry, and worshipping God.

<sup>55</sup>Steele and Rivera, Penitente Self Government, pp. 5-7.

Americans in New Mexico each village used communal labor and mutual support to solve most of the problems resulting from the neglect of both church and state. The community developed their own system to assure law and order, raise children and to perpetuate their faith and culture. Together they built homes, maintained the irrigation ditches and performed their religious celebrations on holy days, buried the dead and recognized marriages.<sup>56</sup>

These Brotherhoods provided the communal, cultural, religious, and spiritual focus of village life. They filled the void left by the departed clergy and handled many of the functions of the earlier confraternities. They buried their dead members, took care of the bereaved families until they were able to make permanent provisions for themselves, and in the absence of civil authority maintained law and order among the Brotherhood and the community at large.<sup>57</sup> Following the old Spanish and Mexican practice of confraternal traditions, the Brotherhoods practiced penance and mercy (acts of charity) as a formal part of their activities. The brothers insisted upon the performance of the traditional seven corporal and seven spiritual works of mercy which were intended to relieve

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<sup>56</sup>Nancie L. González, Spanish-Americans of New Mexico: Heritage of Pride (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1967), p. 41.

<sup>57</sup>Steele and Rivera, Penitente Self Government, p. 9; Flynn, Sacred Charity, p.11; "Most writers agree...that the brotherhood grew rapidly in the early nineteenth-century as a result of neglect by the priests of the institutional church." Weber, Mexican Frontier, p. 79.

physical and spiritual suffering.<sup>58</sup> There was already a strong communal tradition in Spanish culture and it was natural for the laymen to fill the void of lost ecclesiastical direction.<sup>59</sup>

The Sacrament of penance is reserved for the priests of the church. True penitential feelings encouraged by the ecclesiastical hierarchy, were always expressed under priestly guidance. The process involved confession, expiation, and release, and only a priest could absolve a sinner in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Without clergy to provide the Sacrament, communities attempted to make their own arrangements.<sup>60</sup> Nineteenth-century Spanish New Mexicans developed a quasi-sacramental system to handle all of their needs. They produced their own *bultos* and *santos* for the main celebrations of Corpus

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<sup>58</sup>Steele and Rivera, Pentitente Self Government, p. 8.; Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 45. The Corporal Acts of Mercy carried by the confraternities to New Mexico from the medieval tradition were: feed the hungry, house the wayfarer, dress the naked, give drink to the thirsty, visit the sick, dower orphans, bury the dead; and the Spiritual Acts of Mercy were: teach the ignorant, counsel the doubting, admonish the sinner, bear wrongs and adversity patiently, forgive offenses willingly, comfort the afflicted and pray for the living and dead. Flynn, Sacred Charity, pp. 46-47.

<sup>59</sup>Steele, Santos and Saints, p. 70; Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 43. Dorothy Woodward, The Penitentes of New Mexico (New York: Arno Press, 1974) presented the first balanced analysis of the Brotherhoods. Her dissertation written in 1935 included a number of interviews with members of the Brotherhoods and illuminated the integral part the members played in maintaining the community.

<sup>60</sup>Marta Weigle, Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood: The Penitents of the Southwest (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1976), pp. 180-181.

Christi, Christmas, Lent and Holy Week and *velorios*<sup>61</sup> "In other words, what the sacraments and the Mass were to a village with a priest, the communal Penitente imitations, penances, wakes and enactments of the death of Jesus were to a village without one."<sup>62</sup>

A Catholic was renewed through the commemoration of Christ's sacrifice in the celebration of the Mass (which was a function reserved for an ordained priest). By making the Passion and death of Christ central to their own celebrations, the Brotherhood could take upon themselves the suffering of Christ. They embodied in their own bodies His agony, His scouraging, His crowning with thorns, His carrying of the Cross to Calvary, and His being fastened to it and raised from the earth. In a broad sense, the brothers undertook annually to recreate for themselves and their isolated communities this sacred time and place. Their Holy Week observances may be understood as a folk equivalent of the Catholic Mass.<sup>63</sup> Filtered through two hundred years of settlement and Franciscan influence, the Brotherhood practiced the traditions and ideals taught to them by the missionaries. These included public self-flagellation, the Way of the

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<sup>61</sup>A *velorios* a wake with music for the dead.

<sup>62</sup>Steele, Santos and Saints, pp. 69-70.

<sup>63</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, pp. 182, 190; Steele and Rivera, Penitente Self Government, p. 6.

Cross, tenebrae services<sup>64</sup>, Passion plays<sup>65</sup> and the Holy Week sermons on the blood of Christ, the Three Falls, and the Descent from the Cross.<sup>66</sup>

In 1776 the New Mexicans began realizing that their practices were not always approved of by the church in Durango. This became more apparent as rare episcopal visits occurred in the early nineteenth-century. In 1833, Bishop

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<sup>64</sup>Tenebrae services were usually held on Holy Thursday and in the village church rather than in a *morada* (a Brotherhood meeting place). It was a service that symbolized the period of chaos on earth following the crucifixion. It was held at night with the church doors closed and the only light coming from candles on the altar or from the traditional triangular candelabrum (*tenebrario*) holding from thirteen to seventeen candles. Candles were extinguished one by one, interspersed with verses from an *alabado* (hymn) or the recitation of Psalms. The candles represent the Apostles' desertion of Christ, and the last candle, symbolizing Christ, was either covered or removed from the altar. After all lights were out, there was period of loud and terrifying noises, symbolizing the quaking and shattering earth following the death of Christ. The cacaphony alternated with periods of silence for the saying of prayers for the dead. The single candle (of Christ) is eventually brought back (the resurrection) and the others are once again lit from it and the service ends. Weigle, Brothers of Light, pp. 174-175; Stoller, "A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts," pp. 661-662.

<sup>65</sup>In New Mexico and southern Colorado the essential structure of the Passion play always retained the format of the Stations of the Cross. The devotions to the stations enabled the faithful, by identifying themselves through the ritual with the sacred places of Christ's Passion, to be part of the celebration. The goal of the Passion plays was never dramatic excellence. It was to involve all of the people, either as performers or congregation in the religious ceremony. Moving from place to place, reenacting Christ's Passion, singing *alabados*, listening to exchanges among the characters, brought all into a performance that while still a play was also a religious ceremony. In the Passion Plays women also played a part. They carried the statues of the Virgin as she encountered her Son as he carried the Cross and were also part of the Crucifixion and Desposition. Thomas J. Steele, "The Spanish Passion Play in New Mexico and Colorado," New Mexico Historical Review 53 (July 1978): 237, 240-241; Steele, Santos and Saints, p. 66.

<sup>66</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, p. 47.

José Antonio de Zubiría (the first bishop named for Mexico since 1829) made an episcopal visit to New Mexico. This was the first visit by any bishop since Bishop Tamaron had journeyed north in 1760. Zubiría had heard disturbing reports out of New Mexico concerning the Brotherhood of the Blood of Christ (as they were sometimes called).<sup>67</sup> At that time he issued a pastoral letter outlawing them as an unauthorized group that violated Catholic doctrine, stating that their name should be better that of "*carnicería*" (meatmarket).<sup>68</sup> His pastoral letter was read throughout the region but it had no practical effect. In 1845, Zubiría once more visited New Mexico only to find the church in a poor state and the Brotherhood still practicing. The few resident priests were setting a poor example: they failed to baptise infants, misused the sacraments, and said Mass with filthy chalices and dirty altar cloths. The Bishop once more had his pastoral letter read from the pulpits, but with few priests and a great need for some kind of guidance the pastoral letter once more had little effect.<sup>69</sup>

As in the rest of the New Mexican church culture, by the 1830s religious art forms had developed along their own paths. Without ecclesiastical guidance

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<sup>67</sup>Letter from Father Antonio José Martínez to Don José Antonio de Zubiría, Bishop of Durango dated February 21, 1833 as cited in Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 40.

<sup>68</sup>Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 450.

<sup>69</sup>Fray Angelico Chavez, But Time and Chance: The Story of Padre Martinez of Taos, 1793-1867 (Santa Fe: The Sunstone Press, 1981) pp. 45-48; Weber, Mexican Frontier, p. 79; Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 450; and Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 40-42.



on subjects, the proper tools, pictures from books to use as examples, and only the memories of the art brought by the Franciscans, New Mexican religious folk art developed its own style in virtual isolation.<sup>70</sup> From 1817-1820, while on an ecclesiastical visit Father Jaun Bautista Ladron de Guevara demanded the removal of images on painted hides from the *parroquia* (parish church) in Santa Fe, the church in Santa Cruz de la Cañada, and every other place where he found them. He was offended by the "indecenty" of having religious images painted on skins.<sup>71</sup> He, along with Father Agustin Fernandez de San Vicente in 1826 and Bishop José Antonio de Zubiría in 1833, found the crude paintings of the New Mexican artists offensive. They did not complain about the artists' choice of subjects, only on their execution.<sup>72</sup>

I command you (the parishioners of the Santuario de Chimayo) to remove from the chapel all of the santos painted on the hides of animals [sobre pieles de animales] and on rough boards [tables defactuosas]...<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Art of New Mexico as a result of isolation see Mather, Colonial Frontier, pp. 25-26; Wroth, Christian Images, p. 34; Robert L. Shalkop, Reflections of Spain II: A Comparative View of Spanish Colonial Sculpture (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum of Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1970), p. 10; William H. Pierson, Jr., American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970) vol I, p. 168; and Espinosa, Saints in the Valley, p. xii.

<sup>71</sup>Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 125-127.

<sup>72</sup>Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 128.

<sup>73</sup>from Bulletin, mimeographed, of Holy Cross Parish, Santa Cruz, New Mexico, August 31, 1952, quoted in Espinosa, Saints in the Valley, p. 28. The pastoral letter did not affect the position of the *bultos* and *retablos* at Chimayo, Santa Cruz or any other rural New Mexico chapel. It was ignored. Espinosa,

Bishop Zubiría thought locally made *bultos* in the round and painted flat *retablos* were actually "Very Hideous" and for this reason should not be exposed to the faithful. He instructed present and future pastors of Taos not to buy such objects of the santeros and not to bless them unless they happened to be "middlingly acceptable while even then far from perfect."<sup>74</sup>

The religious art style (*Santos*) of New Mexico was part of an extremely old artistic tradition. By contrast with European and American art of the same period, the New Mexican artists fashioned *santos* according to highly defined styles and iconography. Each *santo* was unique, handfashioned, but it still had to conform to basic subject design, iconography, color, and style. The artists imitated to the best of their abilities, with their limited resources, the few statues and paintings imported from Mexico to which they had access. Like the *La Castrense reredos* these earlier pieces served as prototypes, changed in style but traditional in spirit.<sup>75</sup>

There were two important functions of the *santos* in New Mexican religious culture. The first was to keep alive the faith in this Christian society without Bibles or priests by using drama. The faithful used the large *santos* in dramatic presentations: placed them on crosses, placed them in caskets, paraded

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Saints in the Valley, pp. 28-29.

<sup>74</sup>Chavez, But Time, pp. 41-42.

<sup>75</sup>Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 26-27; Steele, Santos and Saints, pp. 29, 46; Mather, Colonial Frontiers, p. 13; and Wroth, Christian Images, pp. 25-26.

them around the community. The *santos* moved as people watched. The second function of the *santos* was to receive the prayers, petitions, and appeals of the worshippers. A saint was identified with each *santos* and therefore could always be found in his designated niche in the church or chapel. The functions of the *santos* are to some degree stylistically contradictory, it was common for *santos* to be a part of a drama (of this world) and also to be used to transcend the world completely by representing a transcendent being. In Catholic art, the *santos* represented someone dead. The saint, was rendered as a *santos* because he/she was martyred for his/her faith or was an example of a devout life to emulate. Like devotional art in painting, these *santos* were used to encourage devotion and transcend the difficulties of normal daily life.

There were three types of *santos*: Supernatural, Preternatural and Natural. God and the Trinity were the only supernatural *santos*. They were the dispensers of justice in the form of salvation and redemption from sin. Angels, having the power to counter the incomprehensible forces of Satan, and other fallen angels were the preternatural *santos*, and the saints, headed by the Virgin Mary, were the natural *santos*.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Mills, People of the Saints, pp. 61-62; and Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 17. Thomas Steele in his work, Santos and Saints, has placed the Virgin with the angels in the preternatural realm (p. 117). Regardless of where she is placed by scholars, her power and strength as seen by the individual believer were not questioned.

As had long been the tradition, the religious nineteenth-century New Mexicans of means made special efforts to honor Christ, the Virgin, or a particular saint through the building of a private chapel. Building a family chapel was an act of devotion and provided an inspiration and was a great convenience for the family and neighbors. Parish priest[s] would often journey to the chapels around the territory to say Mass and perform other services. Usually the chapel was fully equipped with altar furnishings and vestments, so that the traveling priest needed to bring only the holy oils, altarbread, and wine.<sup>77</sup>

Geographic isolation and a conscious decision by the Mexican church to ignore the region resulted in an art which reflected the religious beliefs of a Catholic church long since changed. Despite pastoral letters from far removed bishops to change their penitential practices and "move" into the nineteenth-century, the New Mexican communities, without much priestly help, continued to follow comfortable and familiar theology and practices.

No site better illustrates the religious traditions existing in early-to mid-nineteenth-century New Mexico than the Chapel built by Don Nicholas Sandoval on land next to his home in Rio Chiquito (near Rancho de Taos). The portrayals of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saints all speak to the

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<sup>77</sup>William Wroth, The Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1979), p. 26; Thomas J. Steele and Marianne L. Stoller, eds., Diary of the Jesuit Residence of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Conejos, Colorado, December 1871-December 1875, trans. Jose B. Fernandez (Colorado Springs: The Colorado Colleges Studies, 1982), p. 6; and Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 33-34.

mercy/penance dichotomy which had been a part of the medieval Catholic tradition. Only the renderings themselves - by local *santeros* - made the chapel of Our Lady of Talpa different from many other private chapels of a much earlier period found in Mexico and Spain. Yet it is this chapel that can best illuminate the spiritual world of the nineteenth-century New Mexican Catholic and form a basis from which to judge later outside influences.

In 1837, Sandoval, an *español* (an individual claiming purely Spanish descent) and *vecino* (a citizen and taxpayer) of Rio Chiquito, built and furnished with religious images a small private *oratorio* (chapel) dedicated to *Nuestra Señora de Talpa* (Our Lady of Talpa), in honor of a miraculous shrine and image of the Virgin Mary in Talpa, Jalisco in Mexico.<sup>78</sup> When it was completed, he had it dedicated to the use of the Brotherhood of Our Father Jesus, of which Sandoval was a member. The Mexican church in Durango was at this time demanding an end to all penitential activities in the licensed village churches, but private chapels, like Our Lady of Talpa, were dedicated to the use of the Brotherhoods. In 1835, Sandoval commissioned the artist Jose Rafael Aragón<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>For the life of Sandoval and his family see Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 24-26.

<sup>79</sup>Jose Rafael Aragón was one of the most accomplished and well known *Santero* artists of this period. The *santos* and altarscreen from the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa may very well represent the best example of Aragón's work to have survived intact. For a complete discussion of his style and works see Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 392, 396-397, 404, 406; and Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 200-241.

to make an altar screen for the chapel. The screen was in excellent condition when it was purchased along with the rest of the chapel, by the Taylor Museum of Colorado Springs in the 1940s. It not only illustrates the work of one *santero*<sup>80</sup> but it also illustrates how these images related to the daily lives and reflected the religious beliefs of the nineteenth-century Hispanic New Mexicans just before American occupation.<sup>81</sup>

In the chapel on a daily basis women said rosaries requesting mercy, lit candles in front of the altar and prayed to the Virgin. The month of May

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<sup>80</sup>There are any number of santeros unidentified or not classified by traits to be found in New Mexico; however, there are a number that have been identified by their style: the Quill Pen Santero (1830s-1850s), Santo Niño Santero (1830s-1860s), the place they worked in: Arroyo Hondo Santero and Laguna Santero (1790-1810) and a few placed their signatures on their work: Antonio Molleno (1800-1845), José Aragon (1820-1835), and Jose Rafael Aragon (1820-1862). Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 24. There are any number of works which deal with the artistic styles and techniques of the New Mexican santeros. These include Boyd, Popular Arts; E. Boyd, "New Mexico Bultos with Hollow Skirts: How They were Made," El Palacio, 58 #5 (1951): 145-149; Boyd, Literature of the Santos; Roland F. Dickey, New Mexico Village Arts (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990); Espinosa, Saints in the Valley; Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints; Larry Frank, "Santos Celebration," Art and Antiques IX #10 (December 1992):46-51; Rutherford J. Gettens and Evan H. Turner, "The Materials and Methods of Some Religious Paintings of Early 19th Century New Mexico," El Palacio 58 #1 (1951): 3-16; Kubler, Santos; Mills, People of the Saints; Robert Shalkop, Arroyo Hondo: The Folk Art of a New Mexican Village (Colorado Springs: The Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1969); Wilder and Breitenback, Santos; Worth, Our Lady of Talpa; and Wroth, Images of Penance.

<sup>81</sup>The *santero* was expected by the citizens to be an exemplary citizen and he had to earn a reputation for holiness by moral behavior. He had to be known as a man who was deeply religious and practiced his beliefs. Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 24-26; and Steele, Santos and Saints, pp. 29-43.

increased devotion to Mary, as it was her month. Women dominated the performance of prayers and rosaries. The men maintained the active penitential rites of the Chapel, often meeting at night during Holy Week. In processions and reenactments, the men used the images from the Chapel that they associated with the Passion of Christ. These activities dominated by men and women were not mutually exclusive. Women took part in the Holy Week activities including the preparation of the Last Supper Lenten meal, and participation in the procession at the point of the Agony, Encounter of Jesus and Mary as He carried the Cross, the Crucifixion and the Deposition. Men also prayed the rosary.<sup>82</sup> One way or another, then, the rites involved the whole believing community.

The aspects of penance and mercy, so much a part of the medieval church, permeated the traditions of the nineteenth-century New Mexican Catholic. The inner altarscreen was dedicated to Our Father Jesus, a representation of the suffering Christ, while the chapel itself was dedicated to Our Lady of Talpa, a miraculous image of the Virgin. These two figures symbolize the two aspects of Divinity, penance and mercy. Man could not emulate the merciful aspects of the Divine until his actions were free from sinful motives, therefore he had first to repent and then find mercy. Both penance and mercy were essential for balance and wholeness in this traditional system. The

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<sup>82</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 38, 59; and Steele, Santos and Saints, pp. 66-67.

religious art in the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa expressed both of these aspects.<sup>83</sup>

In this chapel can be found three groups of religious imagery:

Transcendent Images, Images of Penance, and Images of Mercy. Transcendent Images include a *bulto* of the Crucified Christ and two painted figures at the top center of the altarscreen (Figure 2.7). The painted figures are the Father and Son of the Holy Trinity and the Holy Ghost is painted as a Dove. All of these images transcend both categories (penance and mercy) by their universality in the context of the Christian tradition. None of them are identified solely with either penance or mercy. The Holy Trinity is represented on the altarscreen as three identical young men, each with their own attributes: God the Father with the sun, Jesus the Son with a lamb upon his lap, and a dove upon the figure of the Holy Spirit. This is the most ancient form of depicting the Trinity. Brought to the New World, the devotional image of the Trinity as three identical young men continued in provincial and folk art despite papal bans upon this representation in 1628 by Urban VIII and 1745 by Benedict XIV. The Holy Dove at the very top of the altarscreen represents the direct link between God and man that is provided by the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>83</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 58-59.



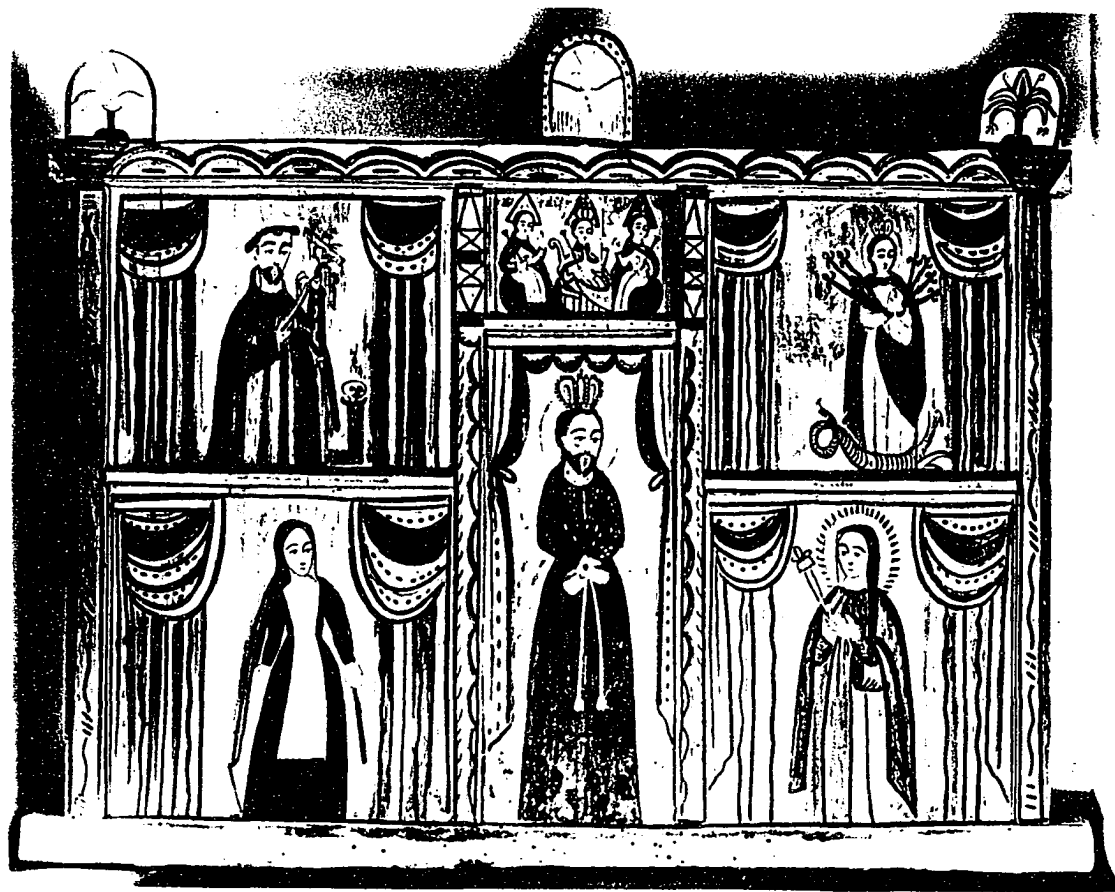


Figure 2.7 Altarscreen: Our Lady of Talpa Chapel. 83 1/2 X 115 inches. Pinewood with tempera painted on gesso ground. Located in Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Neg. No. TM 3906.

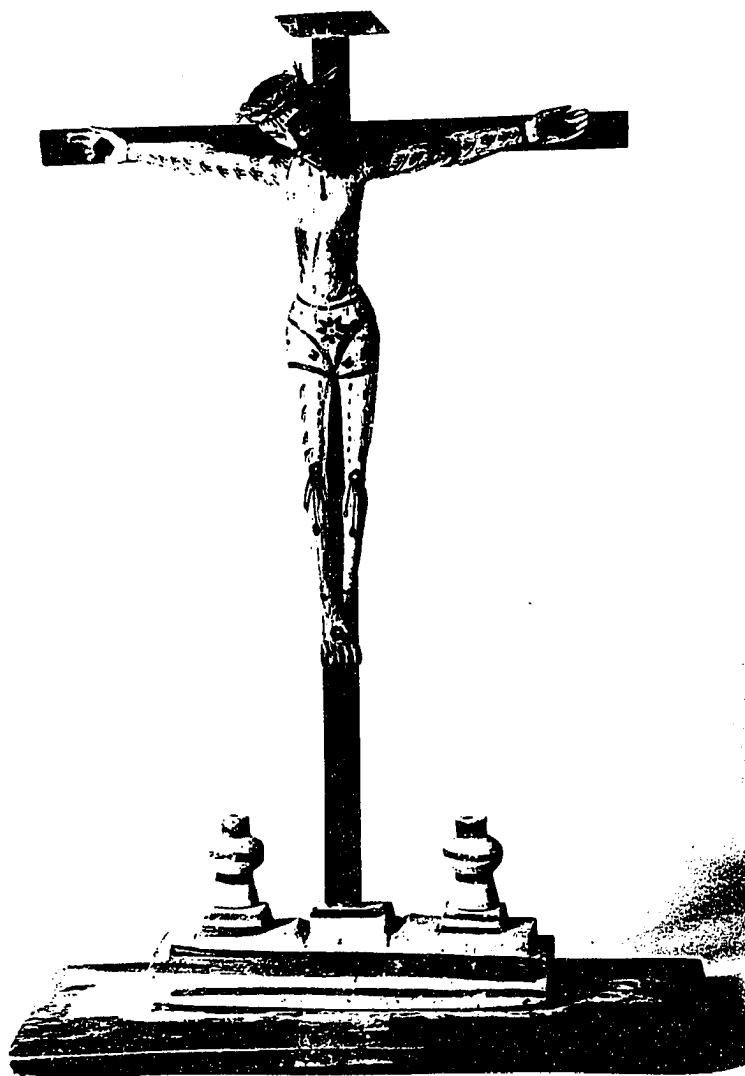


Figure 2.8 Christ crucified known as *La Misericordia* by Rafael Aragón. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 1449.



Figure 2.9 Christ Crucified by unknown santero. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 854.

It is placed at the top of the screen as a blessing on all who would pray there.<sup>84</sup>

The Crucified Christ is a symbol of Christ's supreme sacrifice and the primary symbol for man's imitation of both the suffering of Christ and His selfless love and therefore a part of the Transcendent motif (Figures 2.8, 2.9). It was meant to inspire both profound penance and a desire for mercy.<sup>85</sup> The crucifix was both a symbol and an attribute. An attribute is something that gives reference to the historical or legendary positions or careers of the individual depicted. A symbol represents an abstract quality like piety, learning or eloquence or is an emblem of martyrdom.<sup>86</sup>

The crucifix was a cross with the figure of Christ upon it.<sup>87</sup> One of the two *bultos* (the larger) found in the Talpa chapel was made by the santero who produced the altarscreen, Rafael Aragón. The larger was given the name *La*

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<sup>84</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 59-62; Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 302; Steele, Santos and Saints, pp. 117-118; Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, plate 49; and Donna Pierce, "The Holy Trinity in the Art of Rafael Aragon: An Iconographical Study," New Mexico Studies in the Fine Arts III (1978): 29-33. The later accepted depiction of the Trinity was as three persons symbolically distinguished, with God the Father as an old man, Jesus the Son as a young man and the Holy Spirit as a dove. Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 59-62.

<sup>85</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 59-60; Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, Plates 23, 46, 50, 64; and Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 299.

<sup>86</sup>deBles, How to Distinguish the Saints, 14.

<sup>87</sup>For further study of the evolution of the crucifix see deBles, How to Distinguish the Saints, p. 23.

*Miseracordia* (The Merciful)(Figure 2.8). It was typical of the most popular rendering of the Crucifixion. At the foot of the Cross there are two vases. These vases are a variant of the paintings with John the Beloved and the Virgin Mary as witnesses at the foot of the Cross. The size of this *bulto* (45 inches) also made it large enough to be used in processions. The second and smaller *bulto* is by an unknown artist (Figure 2.9). The *bultos* found in this chapel are carved cottonwood, painted in tempera over a gesso ground. One exception is the St. Anthony of Padua which is carved of pine. Both of these crucifixes have skirts. This was not due to excessive modesty, but established iconographic canon used the skirt as a variant of the loin cloth.<sup>88</sup> This practice had been in place since the Middle Ages. On the larger of the two *bultos* (Figure 2.8) the blood and wounds of Christ are depicted with restraint and a certain abstract quality which was typical of Rafael Aragon. This was in contrast with the realistic and gory crucifixes which will be found a bit later in the New Mexican santero art which was specifically made for the Brotherhoods after American occupation.

The Images of Penance make up the largest number of images found in the chapel. There are seven images of penance found in the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa: Our Father Jesus the Nazarene, Our Lady of Solitude, Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Jerome, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and Christ in the Holy Sepulchre. In chapel art the saints and holy

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<sup>88</sup>J. Dominguez Bordona, Spanish Illumination, Reprint of 1929 edition (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1969), pl. 47, 49.

personages each have a place in the lives of the people. The meaning of each saint and representation of Christ and the Virgin had a special meaning. While the two modes of worship -- penance requiring man to lead a righteous life and mercy requiring man to have total faith in God and to love both God and his neighbor -- are found here, the images of penance provide the ritual purification for the pious Christian. All of these images identify themselves with Christ and his agony. They are also images directly related to the penitential activities of the Brotherhood of Our Father Jesus. The images point out the focus of the penitent, the salvation of the soul.

Our Father Jesus the Nazarene became a popular devotional image of Christ in the twelfth century as the Man of Sorrows. As Gertrud Schiller states, "The Man of Sorrows in its many artistic forms is the most precise visual expression of the piety of the late Middle Ages, which took its character from mystical contemplation rather than from theological speculation."<sup>89</sup> This Man of Sorrows was a devotional image. The Christian of the late Middle Ages sought union with Christ by following in His footsteps along the way of the Passion. This tradition was still practiced by the nineteenth-century Hispanic New Mexicans, particularly the members of the Brotherhoods. To follow the Man of Sorrows meant to imitate or share the suffering of Christ in a world of sin. (The founder of the Franciscans, St. Francis of Assisi, receiving the stigmata was an

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<sup>89</sup>Schiller, Iconography of the Passion, p. 198.

example of the lifestyle all were called to lead.) The Man of Sorrows is not identified with a specific incident in the life of Jesus. His suffering was detached from all spatial and temporal contexts. He was Christ who has suffered and through his suffering brought redemption. It was He who lives and was the Redeemer present in his eternal suffering.<sup>90</sup> Confraternities in Spain and colonial Mexico devoted to the Passion became popular and moved with the Franciscans into New Mexico. This image was brought to New Mexico through engravings, woodcuts, *bultos*, and copper and tin *retablos*.<sup>91</sup> As patron of the Penitente Brotherhoods, Our Father Jesus the Nazarene (Man of Sorrows) was central to their activities. This representation found in the center of the altarscreen (Figure 2.7) is the Christ who suffered and calls all to bear witness.<sup>92</sup> Normally the central position on the altar was taken by the one for whom the chapel was named or dedicated. The central placement of the Man of Sorrows signifies his importance to the brotherhood and the chapel owner. *Bultos* of Our Father Jesus were carried in Holy Week procession. As found in Spain

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<sup>90</sup> Schiller, Iconography of the Passion, pp. 198-199; Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 61.

<sup>91</sup>Giffords, Mexican Folk Retablos, p. 27, for an example of a Mexican tin *retablo* of this subject.

<sup>92</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 33, 60-61; Wroth, Christian Images, pp. 56-57. A detailed discussion of the iconography of the Man of Sorrows in western art can be found in Schiller, Iconography of the Passion, pp. 184-185, 198, 201-205; Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, plates 20, 24, 25, 34, 36, 37.

and colonial Mexico, articulated arms allowed for the "acting out" of various stages of the Passion and the Stations of the Cross.

As the Passion and the Crucifixion of Christ became dominant themes in Christian worship, the advocations of the Virgin as Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Solitude emerged as important images by themselves. They too are from the narrative of the Passion and appeared alone. Both images were used during Holy Week observances. Our Lady of Sorrows was used by the New Mexicans in the Stations of the Cross to reenact the last encounter of Mary and Jesus before the Crucifixion. Our Lady of Solitude played her part after the Crucifixion on Holy Saturday after the Descent from the Cross and on Easter Sunday with the reenactment of the more joyful encounter of Mary and the Risen Jesus.<sup>93</sup>

Always depicted in a nun's habit, Our Lady of Solitude represents Mary's life after the death of her Son when she was said to have lived a life of quiet contemplation. Our Lady of Sorrows (*Mater Dolorosa*) was also portrayed artistically in New Mexico. She was based upon the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:35) in which the prophet Simeon predicted this sorrow for Mary, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." Artistically, Mary is usually depicted with

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<sup>93</sup>Ibid., p. 62; Thomas Steele suggests that the second encounter was an addition in the 19th-century by French priests in the villages of Tomé and San Miguel. Steele, "The Spanish Passion Plays," p. 245. For the complete text of a New Mexico Passion play as enacted in Tomé see Holy Week in Tomé: A New Mexico Passion Play, trans. Thomas J. Steele, S.J. (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1976).



a dagger in her heart symbolizing the piercing mentioned by Simeon at the death of her Son.<sup>94</sup>

The distinction between Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Solitude (the two Sorrowing Mothers) did not always survive in New Mexico with the devout using either statue to depict the Virgin in mourning. There was no question, however, as to the importance of the Sorrowing Mother to the church member. Dominguez noted in his journals the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Solitude in both Albuquerque and Santa Cruz de la Cañada during his visit in 1776.<sup>95</sup> The devotions to the Virgin which particularly emphasized the suffering also included an aspect of love. The merciful role of the Virgin was not forgotten even when the emphasis was upon the sorrow and suffering as can be seen in the prayer written on the roof boards of the Talpa Chapel, "May Most Holy Mary of Sorrows Protect and favor all the Devout ones and slaves of the blood of Christ."<sup>96</sup> and in an *alabados* (hymn) of the Penitentes, "Mother of Solitudes, Mother of Consolation, cover us with thy cloak, with thy Infinite

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<sup>94</sup>Sometimes Our Lady of Sorrows is depicted with seven swords coming out of her heart. They represent seven sorrows that were hers during her lifetime. The first three are sorrows associated with Christ's childhood: Simeon's prophecy, the flight into Egypt and Jesus lost in the Temple. The other four are associated with the Passion: Carrying the Cross, Crucifixion, Descent from the Cross and the Entombment. Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 307.

<sup>95</sup>Dominguez, Missions, pp. 80, 150.

<sup>96</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 62.

compassion."<sup>97</sup> The hymns reflect back to the Virgin as Our Lady of Mercy. In art Our Lady of Mercy is portrayed holding her cloak wide and protecting the followers who asked her for protection. It was also this portrayal of Mary as protector which the Catholic church attempted to suppress during the Counter Reformation wanting instead to focus on the Virgin as the sorrowful mother.<sup>98</sup>

In the Talpa Chapel, Our Father Jesus, at the center of the altarscreen, was flanked by Our Lady of Sorrows (left) and Our Lady of Solitude (right) (Figure 2.7). Besides the rendering of the altarpiece Rafael Aragón also carved a *bulto* of Our Lady of Solitude. At 39 1/2 inches high, she was used during processions by the Brotherhood. The arms were hinged to effect the embrace acted out with the figure of Jesus Nazareno (Figure 2.10).

The final image of the Virgin Mary in the altarscreen is that of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception (Figure 2.7). The mendicant orders advocated the Virgin and the devotions to her in the western church. She was to be the symbol of the universal Catholic Church. The Virgin could change and have many representations (as in the case of the colonial Our Lady of Guadalupe) but she was one and the same. She had thousands of advocations. Some advocations were for a specific moment in her life, like the Immaculate Conception, some

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<sup>97</sup>Juan B. Rael, The New Mexican Alabado Stanford University Publications, University Series, Language and Literature, IX #3 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), p. 268.

<sup>98</sup>Flynn, Sacred Charity, pp. 125-126; Schiller, Iconography of Christian Art, p. 11.



Figure 2.10 Our Lady of Solitude. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 1451.

were for the sites of her shrines, like Our Lady of Lourdes, and some were sponsored by various religious orders, like Our Lady of the Rosary of the Dominicans.<sup>99</sup> The image of the Immaculate Conception has ancient roots in Christian art derived from the woman described in the book of Revelation of St John. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars."<sup>100</sup> Depictions of the Virgin as the woman of Revelation appear very early in Spanish art. By the late sixteenth-century she had become identified with the Immaculate Conception.<sup>101</sup>

The Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception revolves around the belief that Mary had to have been born without taint of original sin. This placed her in a special, elevated status above the rest of humanity. The Franciscan order was devoted to the Immaculate Conception, and in 1621 the Franciscans established Her as patron of their order and pledged themselves to teach the mystery of the

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<sup>99</sup>William A. Christian, Jr., Person and God in a Spanish Village (New York: Seminar Press, 1972), pp. 47-48. Three other works by Christian delve into the Virgin and Spanish culture see William A. Christian, Jr., Apparitions in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); William A. Christian, Jr., Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); and William A. Christian, Jr., "Provoked Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain," In Religious Organization and Religious Experience (Association of Social Anthropologists Series 21) edited by John Davis (London: n.p. 1982), pp. 97-114.

<sup>100</sup>Revelation 12:1

<sup>101</sup>D'Ancona, Immaculate Conception, pp. 13-15.

Immaculate Conception in public and private. They were also responsible for this devotion taking root in the New World with many groups of Franciscans, including those in New Mexico, choosing to wear blue robes in honor of the Immaculate Conception of Mary instead of the usual gray.<sup>102</sup> Although the Doctrine was not officially accepted by the church until 1854, it was given papal sanction in 1616 and therefore could be officially spread throughout the Christian world.<sup>103</sup> In 1760, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception became the principal patron of all of the colonies of Spain, including those in America.

Artistically, the Immaculate Conception was the most popular representation in seventeenth-century Spain. She was painted again and again by Murillo, with those works copied over and over. Francisco Pacheco in his El arte de la pintura, defined the iconographic style to be used by artists when rendering a work of the Virgin as the Immaculate Conception.<sup>104</sup> Many images, including the one at Talpa, has a serpent or dragon under her feet rather than the moon. This also comes from Chapter Twelve of Revelation, and symbolizes the

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<sup>102</sup>Dominguez, Missions, p. 264.

<sup>103</sup>Shalkop, Reflection II, p, 21, 28; Wroth, Images of Penance, p. 13.

<sup>104</sup>Shalkop, Reflections II, p. 21; Enggass and Brown, Sources and Documents, pp. 165-167; Werner Weisback, Spanish Baroque Art: Three Lectures delivered at University of London (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1941), p. 27, 35.

virginal purity of Our Lady and her victory over the forces of evil represented by the dragon.<sup>105</sup>

The place of the Immaculate Conception in the Talpa Chapel is unique. Normally, she is considered a transcendent image. She is the ideal of human purity. Born in grace she transcends normal human limitations. This advocacy is normally used to portray the essential purity of the Virgin who became the mother of the Christ child. The images often emphasize her transcendent nature by depicting her among the clouds, above the earth, surrounded by angels. On the Talpa screen she becomes an image primarily of penance with the inclusion of the seven swords, taking on the same attributes as Our Lady of Sorrows. Rafael Aragón occasionally repeated this in his smaller retablos.<sup>106</sup> Once again this image fits in with the focus on the penitential characteristics of the Penitential Brotherhood.

The final figure, located in the upper left hand corner, found on the altarscreen is St. Francis (Figure 2.7). He has a prominent position for several reasons. First, he was the founder of the Franciscan Order. Second, St. Francis' penitential attributes can be seen in the image on the altarscreen. In this depiction of St. Francis he was meditating upon the Passion while holding a

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<sup>105</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 63; Revelation 12.

<sup>106</sup>Espinosa, Saints in the Valley, plate #22; and Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 63-64.

crucifix with his hands bearing the stigmata.<sup>107</sup> From the earliest writings it is apparent that St. Francis and the members of his order practiced self-flagellation as well as other forms of penance. In the Third Orders and Confraternities the priests sponsored self-mortification. While it is true that St. Francis also tempered his devotion to the Passion with his devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the child Jesus (he is given credit for popularizing the Christmas creche) it was his devotion to the sacrifice of Christ and his personal devotion to Christ's suffering which endeared him to the New Mexican Brotherhoods. His position was of central importance to the Brotherhood and was indicated by his title "Our Father St. Francis," written on the altarscreen below his image.<sup>108</sup>

A *bulto* of St. Jerome is also found in the chapel. Jerome was one of the four Doctors of the early church, and lived in the fourth century. Much of his life he lived the ascetic life of a hermit in isolation in the desert. He practiced self denial, prayer and contemplation in the desert.<sup>109</sup> Generally, he is portrayed as a saintly contemplative ascetic. The *bulto* by Aragón depicts Jerome holding both a rock and a bludgeon and he is in the act of killing a

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<sup>107</sup>The stigmata refers to the replication of the wounds of the Passion of Christ on the human body. The first person believed to have received the stigmata was St. Francis.

<sup>108</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 63; Flynn, Sacred Charity, pp. 127-131; Wroth, Images of Penance, pp. 10-12.

<sup>109</sup>Jerome is also seen as a Cardinal contemplating a book with a lion at his feet and a skull nearby.

creature beneath his feet. Aragón has him moving from a character of contemplation to one of action against evil. He was the patron of the church at the Taos Pueblo and thus for the Taos valley in which Talpa resided until the 1830's when the parish headquarters was moved from the Pueblo church. Jerome is traditionally prayed to for aid against temptation and his active fight against sin is consistent with penitential activities.

The last image of penance found in the Talpa Chapel is of Christ in the Holy Sepulchre. There is a long history of this imagery in Christian art.<sup>110</sup> The articulated figure of *Cristo Entierro* was used in nineteenth-century Spain and Mexico in the same manner as in New Mexico.<sup>111</sup> Christ in the Holy Sepulchre was important to the Penitente Brotherhoods because of their devotion to the blood of Christ. It was used to reenact the Passion and Crucifixion of Christ during Holy Week processions.<sup>112</sup> Locally, the figure was called *La Sangre de Cristo* (The Blood of Christ). The Talpa figure designed to be attached to a cross, to simulate the Crucifixion, and to be placed in the casket along the left side of the nave of the chapel was life size, (sixty-six inches tall),

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<sup>110</sup>Schiller, Iconography of the Passion, pp.181-184.

<sup>111</sup>Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, plates 26, 39.

<sup>112</sup>Foster, Culture and Conquest, p. 180, Note #188; In Amecameca, State of Mexico, there is a site of a shrine dedicated to *Cristo Entierro*. It was a major pilgrimage site every year during Holy Week. For description of observances in 1880s see Thomas Janvier, The Mexican Guide (New York: Scribner's and Sons, 1895), pp. 480-484.



carved of cottonwood, painted in tempera on a gesso ground (Figures 2.11, 2.12). It is attributed to Rafael Aragón and thought to have been produced around 1838. In a procession on Good Friday, the figure in its casket moved from the Talpa Chapel to Llano de Talpa where the *morada* (a Brotherhood chapel) was located.<sup>113</sup> The *Cristo Entierro* was attached to the cross and a vigil maintained until evening when it was returned to its casket and carried back to the Talpa chapel where it remained during the year.<sup>114</sup>

The remainder of the *bultos* in the Talpa Chapel are images of mercy. Their roles were generally to serve as intermediaries in prayers and requests for Divine mercy. The Virgin Mary traditionally held this place and it was no exception in Hispanic New Mexico. Two important titles of Mary were Our Lady of Mount Carmel (patroness of the Carmelite Order) and Our Lady of the Rosary (patroness of the Dominicans).<sup>115</sup> The *bulto* of Our Lady of Talpa, carved of cottonwood, painted in tempera on a gesso ground and 39 inches high, is a copy of the original Our Lady of the Rosary at the Basilica of Talpa in Jalisco, Mexico (Figure 2.13).

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<sup>113</sup>Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, p. 40.

<sup>114</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 64. The Taylor Museum has a similar piece from the Arroyo Hondo *morada*. See: Shalkop, Arroyo Hondo, p. 12. I saw another *Cristo Entierro* in his casket in the left wall of the church in Santa Cruz de la Cañada in the summer of 1992.

<sup>115</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, pp. 59, 65.

In the Talpa Chapel, the *bulto* not only brings the blessings of Our Lady of the Rosary but also the blessings of the Talpa, Jalisco image. It was this *bulto* of Our Lady of Talpa the villagers carried through the fields of Río Chiquito to encourage rain. The advocacy of Our Lady of Talpa seems limited to the Taos region with images of her in the Ranchos de Taos, Río Chiquito churches, and the chapel built by another member of the Sandoval-Duran family, on the Río de Santa Barbara near Peñasco. The original work of Our Lady of Talpa was believed to perform miracles and this ability was passed on to copies of the pieces.<sup>116</sup>

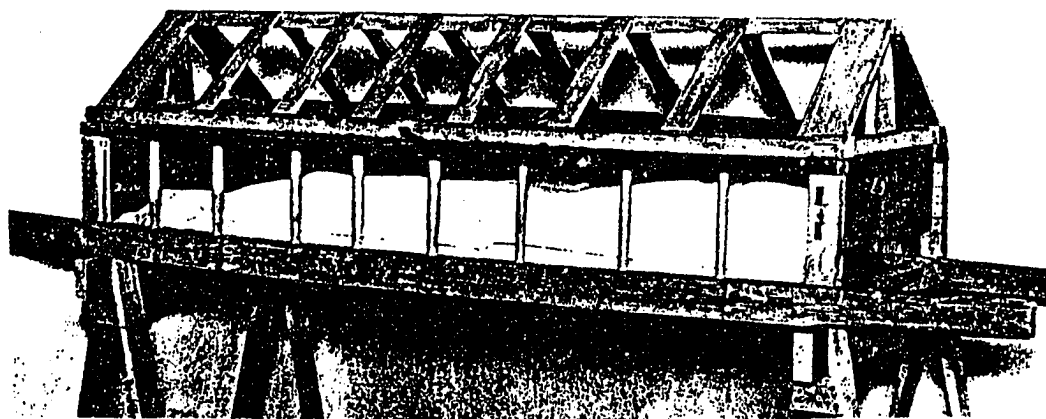
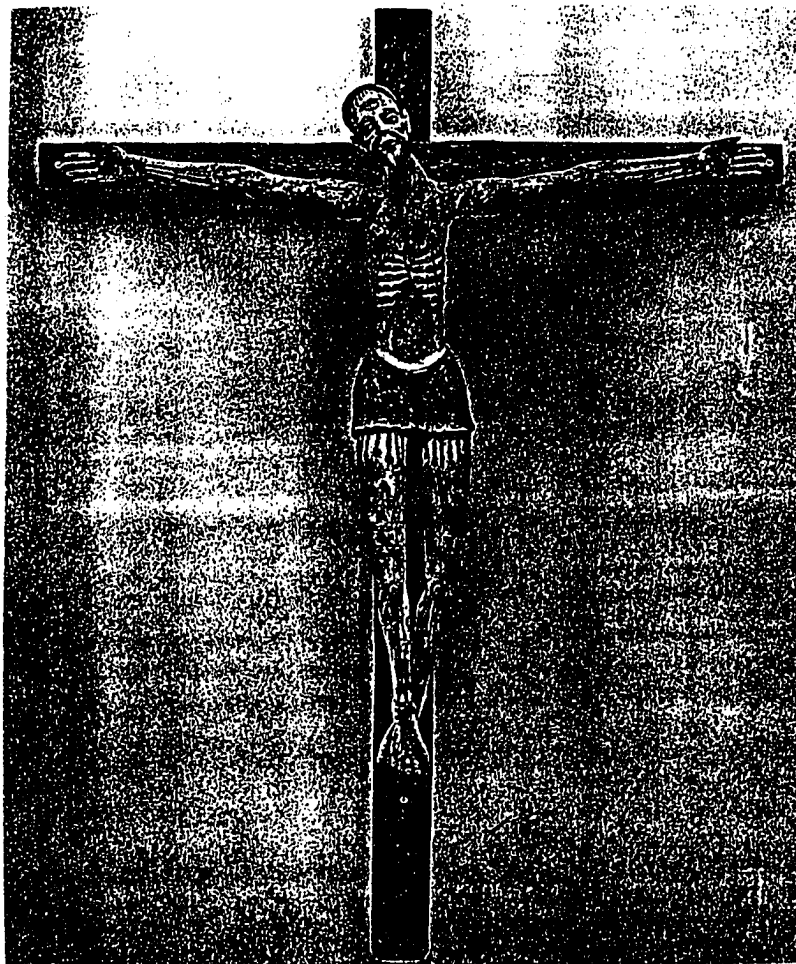
The *bulto* of Our Lady of the Rosary ( 32 1/2 inches high) found in the Talpa Chapel is missing the Christ child and the rosary she usually held in her right hand (Figure 2.14). The use of the rosary is a means to salvation. By praying the rosary the Christian actively sought the aid of Mary in attaining salvation. Sometimes a *bulto* was dressed in clothing. It was the custom for the women of the communities to make clothes for the Virgin. Many statues had wardrobes for the liturgical year.<sup>117</sup>

The final *bulto* of mercy is *El Santo Niño* (The Holy Child) (Figure 2.15). The Holy Child was seen to embody the aspect of Christ's Divine mercy.

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<sup>116</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 66; Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp.306-307. For a detailed discussion on the transference of the power from one image to another see Freedberg, The Power of Images.

<sup>117</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 66; Chavez, Autobiography of La Conquistadora, pp. 47-38.



Figures 2.11, 2.12 Christ in the Holy Sepulchre and casket. Photos Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 1398, TM 5057.

The child was credited with miraculous rescues<sup>118</sup> and He was taken to an expectant mother's room to provide a blessing for the newborn child. According to Leandro Duran, "...El Santo Niño was the most popular image in the Chapel, having helped hundreds of babies into the world. The *bulto* was still used in this manner in the early 1940s when several of Duran's grandchildren were starting their families."<sup>119</sup>

The images of the Chapel of Our Lady of Talpa provide a visual clue to understanding the religious culture that had developed over centuries in this isolated region. In the transcendent images we see portrayed the most sacred personages of the Christian hierarchy. The images of penance provide examples of the required ritual purification demanded of the pious Christian who, above all, identified with the Crucified Christ. The images of mercy provided the means of access to Divine grace. Although separated into three groups, they were not separate in the minds of the people who honored them. All of them were necessary for the salvation of the soul. This Chapel reflected the traditions

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<sup>118</sup>The legend of the Holy Child (also known as the Christ Child of Atocha) concerns the Moorish invasion of Atocha, Spain, during which Christian prisoners were taken. Although the prisoners were starving, only children were allowed to deliver them food. One day a child came, carrying a basket, a staff, and a gourd of water. His provisions could not be emptied. This little pilgrim was the Christ child. Mather, Baroque to Folk, p. 58; Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p.299.

<sup>119</sup>Wroth, Our Lady of Talpa, p. 66.



Figure 2.13 Our Lady of Talpa. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg, No. TM 1450.



Figure 2.14 Our Lady of the Rosary. Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 3902.



Figure 2.15 *El Santo Niño* (The Holy Child). Photo Courtesy Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg.No. TM 3903.

of the New Mexican Hispanic Catholic Church of the early nineteenth-century (Figure 2.16).

Artistically, the technique and materials reflected the New Mexican Hispanic tradition as it developed using the materials available. Generally, pine and cottonwood were the woods of choice for the *bultos*. It was easier to carve than most woods. Once carved the figure was plastered with gesso (white gypsum), dried, polished, and painted with tempera colors. Sometimes imported pigments were used but due to the great expense, most of the pigments came from natural minerals and vegetable dyes. Colors included indigo, iron oxides, and vegetal yellows. To articulate the arms, leather hinges were attached. For the *retablo* hand-hewn pine was the wood used, with the surface treated, covered with gesso and painted with tempera paints.<sup>120</sup>

This church, which had begun under the influence of the Franciscan missionaries, was deserted by the secular Mexican church after Independence. Left to its own devices, it developed into a popular church that filled both the physical and spiritual needs of its people.

With the coming of the Americans and their Catholic Church in the 1850s, pressures came to bear challenging the old medieval traditions and folk ways of the New Mexican inhabitants. This "new" Catholic church brought with it the

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<sup>120</sup>Grizzard, Spanish Colonial Art and Architecture, p.75.



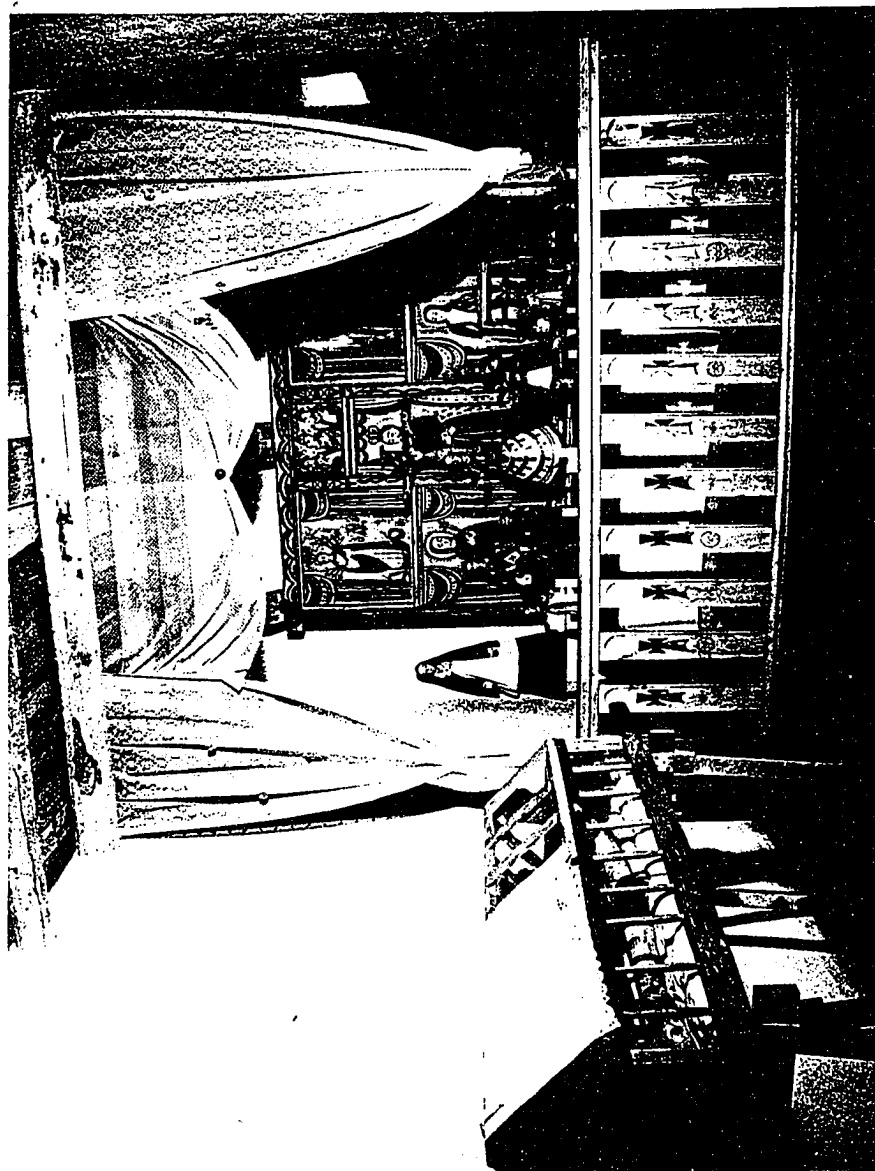


Figure 2.16 Our Lady of Talpa Chapel displaying the art as reconstructed at the Taylor Museum, Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM 3910.

theology and celebrations of a French Catholic Church of a post-Enlightenment, ultramontane experience which worked from the top down and was the instrument of a conquering people with new goals and focus for this New Mexican territory and church.

The chapel of Our Lady of Talpa provides the point of departure for the conflict which was to arise when two fundamentally different Catholic traditions were to meet head to head. One tradition believed the old ways were the best and that the church ran best from the bottom up with the other intent upon making reforms long needed in the region and controlling from the top down.

## CHAPTER 3

### SANTA FE DE SAN FRANCISCO

On Sunday, August 9, 1851, Father Jean Baptiste Lamy and his party made a triumphal entrance into the town of Santa Fe. Three years earlier, with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidago ending the Mexican-American War the United States of America found itself the owners of territory settled by Roman Catholic Mexicans. Included in the vast area now owned by the United States was the New Mexican Territory with its capital, Santa Fe, located on the Río Grande River. Lamy's arrival was greeted by several thousand of the territory's citizens. Those assembled included the Governor of the Territory James Calhoun, the Very Reverend Monsignor Juan Felipe Ortiz (the ranking Mexican clergyman and future combatant of Lamy) and all civil and military authorities. Along with the leading citizens, hundreds of Indian dancers in their own costumes came to greet the new Church leader.

The establishment of the Catholic church in the American West was a long time in coming. In 1849, several years before Lamy's triumphant arrival in Santa Fe, Archibishop Eccleston of Baltimore along with Bishops Portier and Chanche proposed the establishment of two Apostolic Vicarates "comprising the

Rocky Mountains East and New Mexico (Santa Fe)" along with several other dioceses. In 1850 the formal request of the Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore was approved by Rome and among other actions the Vicarate Apostolic of Santa Fe was established.<sup>1</sup> The size of the Vicarate Apostolic of Santa Fe was ill-defined.<sup>2</sup> Generally, it included New Mexico, Arizona (except the Gadsden Purchase area), the southern tip of present-day Nevada, and most of Colorado lying east of the Continental Divide and south of the Arkansas River. Beyond the official, if ill-defined, Vicarate limits Lamy was also in charge of Utah and some of the other parts of the Mexican Cession of 1848 including the El Paso region of Texas.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Finbar Kenneally, ed., United States Documents in the Propaganda Fide Archives: A Calendar, vol. 6 (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1976), 46 nos. 271, 272, 273; Peter Guilday, ed., The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy 1792-1919, (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1954), p. 171; Nancy Nell Hanks, "Not of This Earth: An Historical Geography of French Secular Clergy in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1850-1912," (PhD dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1993), p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>A Vicarate Apostolic is a diocese in the process of formation. Its Vicar Apostolic is a consecrated Bishop who, like a retired bishop, has a titular "see" *in partibus infidelium* (in the regions of the infidels - usually some former episcopal city then occupied by the Muslims). Lamy's title was officially Vicar Apostolic of Agathonica (in Thrace, present-day Bulgaria). W.J. Howlett, Life of Bishop Machebeuf, ed. Thomas J. Steele, S.J. and Ronald S. Brockway (Denver: Regis College, 1987), p. 425.

<sup>3</sup>Howlett, Machebeuf, p. 169. The Catholic Church did not always respect the political boundaries of countries when establishing its jurisdictions. In the nineteenth century, with many political boundaries changing in both Europe and the Americas, the Catholic Church made greater attempts to give ecclesiastical control to bishops residing in the nations of political control. New Vicarate boundaries were determined by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of

Bishop Lamy and Vicar General Machebeuf introduced a new kind of Catholic culture into the New Mexican countryside.<sup>4</sup> When Lamy and Machebeuf arrived in Santa Fe in 1851 seventeen secular native-born New Mexican clergy were in the territory.<sup>5</sup> By 1853, after the suspension of several priests, the number of native clergy had fallen to thirteen. Father José de Jesus Lujan (stationed in Santa Fe), Father José de Jesus Cabeza de Baca (stationed in Tomé), and Father José Antonio Otero (stationed in Socorro) chose to return to the diocese in Durango, Mexico.<sup>6</sup> In 1854, the Catholic Directory actually showed fewer priests in the Vicarate Apostolic of Santa Fe than when Lamy arrived in 1851. The years 1854 to 1856 saw the number of French clergy double to ten and the number of non-French clergy shrink to eleven.

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the Faith (*Propaganda Fide*) located in Rome. The *Propaganda Fide* regulated ecclesiastical affairs in mission countries and as such had authority over all missionary countries and inhabitants, over societies of ecclesiastics and seminaries founded exclusively for the foreign missions, and also over religious orders as missionaries.

<sup>4</sup>A Vicar General is a priest or higher cleric who is assigned to help the bishop and whose office expires with that of the bishop.

<sup>5</sup>Hanks, "Not of This Earth," p. 125.

<sup>6</sup>Fray Angelico Chavez, "A Nineteenth Century New Mexico Schism," New Mexico Historical Review 58 (1983):35-54; Old Faith and Old Glory 1846-1946: The Story of the Church in New Mexico Since the American Occupation (Santa Fe: Santa Fe Press, 1946), p.7; Fray Angelico Chavez, But Times and Chance: The Story of Padre Martínez of Taos, 1793-1867 (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 1981); Horgan, Lamy, p. 195.

The French clergy were frequently stationed at parish churches, replacing New Mexican priests seen by Lamy as rebellious.<sup>7</sup> In the Catholic Church the parish provided a central location for diocesan activities such as the Eucharist. The diocesan bishop is responsible for erecting, altering, and suppressing of parishes as needed. In New Mexico, with the low density of the population, the practice was to station one or two priests at an established church located in the parish seat -- generally a village or Indian pueblo. These priests were to guide the parishioners through the trials and tribulations of mortal life, teaching them the "proper" ceremonies to worship God, to live out His commandments, and to follow all appropriate Church Dogma and Doctrine. The priest held regular Sunday services at the parish church and travelled to the smaller villages to say Mass on a less frequent basis. Small communities often had their own small community chapels or private family-owned chapels, thereby answering local needs for a place to worship.<sup>8</sup> Through the 1850s as the number of French

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<sup>7</sup>Letters from Lamy to Purcell, Santa Fe, September 2, 1851; February 1, 1852; and April 10, 1853 Lamy Letters, Notre Dame Archives, University of Notre Dame, South Bend, IN.

<sup>8</sup>French clergy replacing unhappy New Mexican priests included Fathers Juillard and Ussel at Taos, Father Eguillon at Socorro and Father Brun at Tomé. Joseph A. Janicki, "Chapter VI: Parishes, Pastors, and Parochial Vicars," in The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary, ed. James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green, and Donald E. Heinstchel (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), p. 415; Thomas J. Steele and Marianne L. Stoller, eds., Dictionary of the Jesuit residence of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish: Conjejos, Colorado December 1871-December 1875 trans. José B. Fernández (Colorado Springs: The Colorado College Studies, 1982), p. 6; Hanks, "Not of this earth," pp. 128-131.

clergy increased, Lamy created new parishes under French clerical control and whenever possible replaced native clergy. Once a parish was placed under the control of a French secular clergyman, it was rarely reassigned to a non-French priest. In 1857, the French clergy were in the majority with fourteen and the non-French numbered ten (six were Hispanic, one Irish, one Dutch, one Spanish [from Spain] and one Polish). The Hispanic clergy were stationed primarily in parishes in the north and northwest of the Archdiocese.<sup>9</sup> By the end of the 1860s there were twenty-seven French clergy in the Archdiocese and only five non-French priests. Only five native New Mexicans were ordained as priests between the years 1851 and 1912 (when New Mexico became a state). Lamy recruited American nuns from Kentucky (Sisters of Loretto) to open schools for girls and he recruited the De La Salle Christian Brothers from France for the boys. The Christian Brothers, a teaching Brotherhood for poor boys, came to Santa Fe from France and founded a college in 1859 (St. Michael's College, known today as College of Santa Fe) and established schools around the territory.

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<sup>9</sup>Father Trujillo was at Santa Fe de la Cañada until 1869 when he was replaced by the French Father Jean Baptiste Courbon; Father Salazar was at Abiquiú until replaced in 1869 by the French Fathers Valezy and Novert; Father Medina was assigned to the Indian pueblo of San Ildefonso until the Pueblo became part of the Santa Cruz Parish with French priest Father Remuzon; Father José Eulogio Ortiz was assigned to the Indian Pueblo of San Juan and replaced by the French Father Lassaigne in 1865; Father Abeyta was assigned to the Indian Picuras Pueblo when in 1880 it was absorbed into the parish of Peñaco under the French Father Goyot and Father Valencia was assigned to Jemez. Hanks, "Not of this Earth," p. 133.

From 1850 to 1915, 116 of the 177 secular clergy which served in the area that would eventually become the Archdiocese of Santa Fe would be French.<sup>10</sup> The first five Archbishops of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe were French. Not only were large portions of the clergy French but over thirty percent of these priests were from the Auvergne region of France (Lamy's home region), and many of the earliest clergy received training in the diocesan seminary of Montferrand in Clermont-Ferrand (Lamy's *alma mater*), leading Machebeuf in 1877 to remark on Auvergne's dominance in priestly education with reference to the Santa Fe Province as "une petite Auvergne."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Hanks, "Not of this Earth," pp. 135-137 The native New Mexican clergy ordained were: Father José Eologio Ortiz (1854). Father Ramaon Medina (1865), Fathers Manuel Felipe de Jesus Chavez, José Tafoy, and José Miguel Vigil (1859). These men made up the majority of the Hispanic clergy which served in New Mexico during the territorial period. For more on the De La Salle Christian Brothers see Brother Angelus Gabriel, The Christian Brothers in the United States, 1848-1948: A Century of Catholic Education (New York: the Declan X. McMullen Company, Inc., 1948); Saint Michael's College, 75 Years of Service, 1859-1934 (Santa Fe: Saint Michael's College, 1934); Brother A. Edward, "History of the Christian Brothers' Educational Work in New Mexico Since American Occupation." (Masters Thesis, University of New Mexico, 1940). All of these works were found in the Southwest Provincial Archives of the de La Salle Christian Brothers, Lafayette, Louisiana. As populations grew, the Vicarate Apostolate (and later Diocese) of Santa Fe gradually shrank as Arizona (1869, 1897) and Colorado (1868, 1887) became their own Vicariate Apostolics and diocese and Utah was assigned to San Francisco. The Archdiocese of Santa Fe, erected on February 12, 1875, covered the entire territory of New Mexico minus the two southern counties of Doña Ana and Grant. Hanks, "Not of This Earth," Figure 2.2, pp. 37, 106.

<sup>11</sup>Hanks, "Not of This Earth," pp. xvii, 37-38, 46-47.



The clergy of the nineteenth-century Catholic church concerned themselves with the role lay people played in church affairs. French priests, particularly those from the Sulpician tradition, believed in clerical control of parish affairs and viewed the role of lay people as "pay, pray and obey."<sup>12</sup> This tradition, while consistent with nineteenth-century Catholic sensibilities, was quite different from Catholic traditions which had been deposited by the Spanish Franciscans of the seventeenth-century, continued in New Mexico through Mexican independence and had over time transformed the New Mexican church into the relatively self-sufficient popular church community that now came under French clerical control.

Conflict between the Hispanic New Mexican clergy and the new French clerics was bound to occur. Issues of power, money and teachings would all affect relations between the groups. As in the Spanish tradition, Jesus and the Virgin Mary were still major themes of nineteenth-century Catholicism. The gulf separating the Spanish and French cultures found in New Mexico in 1851 highlighted vastly different understandings of these themes as illustrated by artistic representations.

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<sup>12</sup>The Sulpician Order taught in the seminaries. They were known as the teaching order and were considered to be "priests' priests." They taught an aristocratic concept of the priesthood, placing great emphasis upon the *esprit ecclesiastique* in which the priest was the visible expression of Christ upon earth. Hanks, "Not on This Earth," pp. 37-38, 48. Jay Dolan, American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1985), pp. 167, 177.

In New Mexican Catholic art, the sacrifice of Jesus as seen in the Crucifix, the Man of Sorrows, and Christ entombed, and of the sorrowful Mother as seen in Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Solitude, all reflected the Passion of Jesus, and the Christocentric focus of an earlier era. It found itself replaced in the mid-nineteenth century Catholic culture by the rise of the Marian century with apparitions of the Madonna as the Immaculate Conception in Lourdes, the design and minting of the Miraculous Medal, and most importantly, the rise of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Except in the center of economic, political, and ecclesiastical power (Santa Fe) and in the primary center of American settlement (Albuquerque), nineteenth-century French influence as reflected in the religious art was moderate at best and nonexistent in a large portion of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

The town of Santa Fe experienced the greatest change. The Cathedral of St. Francis, and especially the Our Lady of Light Chapel (later known as the Loretto Chapel), reflects the major influence of the new French culture, while smaller chapels and churches like the Chapel of San Miguel, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of the Rosary retained their New Mexican style.

Outside the center of ecclesiastical power in Santa Fe is Santa Cruz de la Cañada, founded by the Spanish in 1695 with the parish church there dating back to 1733. The first French priest assigned to this large parish was in 1869,

eighteen years after Lamy arrived in Santa Fe. As a parish church administering to a large number of villages and Indian pueblos it was an important assignment and reflects the architectural influence of the new clergy outside Santa Fe.

In smaller New Mexican communities priests visited private chapels and held Mass for the local inhabitants. Great distances made regular service attendance difficult for most New Mexicans so either a local wealthy family or group of families would petition for permission to build a chapel to give the community a gathering place for daily prayers, novenas, rosaries and the occasional Mass. The *Sanctuario de Chimayó*, located north of Santa Fe and attended by the clergy from Santa Cruz de la Cañada, was a private chapel owned and maintained by an individual family. Famous for the healing dirt found on the site, it has been well documented in photographs, archeological studies and it is the site of a new devotion in New Mexico (Our Lord Esquípulas).

With the arrival of the French clergy the Brotherhood of Our Father Jesus the Nazerene (often referred to in local writings as the Penitentes) found themselves on the fringes of the officially endorsed Catholic church. Rejected by the nineteenth-century clergy because of Penitential rituals, such as public flagellation, harkening back to medieval Spain, the Brotherhoods found themselves denied use of the parish churches. As a result they retreated into the countryside and built their own meeting houses called *moradas* (chapels).

Abiquiú, a very old settlement, founded around 1740 has two *moradas*, established at different times. In these chapels Spanish New Mexican culture survived intact, little influenced by the French Catholicism imported into the region with American sovereignty.

### **Nineteenth-Century French Religious Art**

Only a few decades before Lamy's arrival in Santa Fe, France had gone through a revolution and the convulsions of the Napoleonic period. The French (Gallic) church had retrenched and found itself turning to Rome for direction, resulting in conservative ultramontane (meaning "over the mountain" towards Rome) policies and attitudes toward clerical control and popular religion. For the ultramontanes, the Pope, as the living embodiment of authority and tradition, was entitled to exercise ultimate control over religious affairs and ecclesiastical administration in all the countries of Europe. The clergy pushed for a return to the Roman liturgy, and showed a strong preference for the traditional in all things. In liturgical music, for example, they revived Gregorian plainchant. French religious art began to drift back to the styles of Byzantium and the icons of the Middle Ages. The arts were seen as "tributaries" of the liturgy; therefore

the contemporary arts were to return to the severity, simplicity, and sacerdotal gravity of the Roman rite.<sup>13</sup>

Because the French state was the patron of the Catholic church and owned the ecclesiastical buildings and was responsible for their upkeep, the decoration of the churches with paintings, sculpture, frescos, and furniture was commissioned and paid for by the State. The subjects were uncontroversial: Madonnas, Christ, and Crucifixes. But inside the French Catholic church itself there was a struggle raging between the ultramontanes and the naturalists over style. Just as the ultramontanes turned to the past for guidance in thwarting liturgical changes, so too did they turn to the past for their artistic inspiration. Paintings and statuary underwent significant changes. Until the nineteenth-century devotional objects that meant something to the people were relics and old statues which were usually small, primitive and dated from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As often happens in popular religion parishioners believed the statues possessed magical and curative powers, particularly if rubbed against

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<sup>13</sup>Ralph Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism, 1789 - 1914 (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 54-55; Michael P. Driskel, Representing Belief: Religion, Art and Society in Nineteenth Century France (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 23, 83. For an indepth look at the Catholic church of the nineteenth century see Louis J. Rogier, gen. ed., The Christian Centuries. 5 vols. (new York: Paulist Press, 1978), vol. 5: The Church in a Secularized Society, by Roger Aubert, translated by Janet Sondeheimer; Roger Aubert et al., The Church in the Age of Liberalism, trans. Peter Becker (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1981); Francis X. Flood, "The Catholic Church in Nineteenth Century France," in Christian Imagery in French Nineteenth Century Art 1789-1906 (new York: Shepherd Gallery, Associates, Inc., 1980; Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism.

the ailing part of the body. Some of these old statues of saints and the Virgin were almost beyond recognition. The ultramontane clergy in the nineteenth-century condemned these ancient statues of the Virgin because they did not correspond with the new ideals presented by the Church of Our Lady. They considered some painted renderings of the saints profane. For example, earlier works depicting St. Sebastian's martyrdom showed his nude body full of arrows. Nudity was condemned.<sup>14</sup>

Jules Varnier, painter, poet, and critic, expressed the view of several prominent ultramontane painters and architects when he stated that religious art should be "a mystical composition . . . one located entirely within religious tradition and the true spirit of Christianity. It expresses a symbol and not a material action; it is the interpretation of an idea and not the reproduction of fact."<sup>15</sup> An artistic example of Varnier's philosophy was Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres' "La Vierge a l'hostie" (Figure 3.1) In Varnier's view, "this composition [was] entirely mystical, which is to say that it is executed entirely according to religious tradition and the true spirit of Christianity. . . ."<sup>16</sup>

Inside of a circle, reminiscent of the mandorla (the almond shaped aureole which surrounded the whole person of a sacred person) the Virgin is meditating

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<sup>14</sup>Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism, p. 154.

<sup>15</sup>Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 101.

<sup>16</sup>From an article in "L'Artiste" found in Driskel, Representing Belief, p.102.

upon the Host (the mystical body of Christ), looking down in modesty, clothed in garments which hide her sexuality and hands together in prayer, the Virgin is the perfect example of piety, modesty and spiritual transcendency. Two angels perform the tasks of altarboys, with one shown lighting a lamp.

Two strong ultramontanes of the first half of nineteenth-century France were Charles de Montalembert and Alexis-Francois Rio. Both wrote often on the proper art for the Catholic church. Montalembert, following Rio's lead, defined a polarity between the sacred style and the naturalist style. Sacred art needed to promote a sense of calm, permanence, and simplicity. Stasis was praised. All illusions to movement and dramatic lighting effects were condemned. Rio in his book, Dela Poesie chretienne dans sa matiere et dans ses formes argued that Christian art could not and should not be measured by the same technical standards one applied to "pagan" art. It needed to be judged by the degree to which it possessed the quality of "belief." The idea that the value of a work of art was a function of the state of its creator's soul became standard during this period. Not surprisingly by this measure, the art of the Renaissance was condemned as too sensual and graphic and lacking true Christian inspiration.<sup>17</sup> For conservatives like Rio and Montalembert, the pious art of Fra Angelico of the late Middle Ages was held up as an example of the sensitivity and real faith

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<sup>17</sup>Alexis-Francois Rio, De la Poesie chretienne dans sa matiere et dans ses formes, In Driskel, Representing Belief, pp. 64, 71.



Figure 3.1 *La Vierge à l'hostie* by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, 1854.  
In Driskel, *Representing Belief*, p. 112.



which should be found in art. Symbolism was the center of religious art. Rigidity in design was the norm, with a willful renunciation of the desire to stimulate the senses in favor of an austere art represented with straight lines and no movement.<sup>18</sup>

Two engravings of the Madonna represent the differences: the first engraving is an example of Gallic classicism taken from a 1735 statue by Bouchardon destroyed during the French Revolution and is an example of what ultramontanes perceived as the corruption of religious art in France; the second is an engraving after a drawing by Eduard von Steinle. In the first, the arms of the Virgin are open implying a licentious invitation to the viewer to come into her embrace. The folds of the garment move with the body in a sensual manner (Figure 3.2). The second drawing shows the Virgin with closed arms, encapsulated in a caste oval implying closure to the world. The folds of her garment are stiff, concealing, even negating the body underneath. (Figure 3.3) Montalembert's book on religious art, Du Vandalisme et du catholicisme dans l'art, published in Paris in 1839 used both of these engravings to point out the

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<sup>18</sup>For an understanding of nineteenth-century French religious art see H. Daniel-Rops, The Church in An Age of Revolution, 1789-1870 trans. John Warrington (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co, Inc., 1965), pp.420-424; Driskel, Representing Belief: Religion, Art and Society in Nineteenth Century France; Elizabeth Kasley, "Religious Art in Nineteenth Century France," In Christian Imagery in French Nineteenth Century Art, 1789-1906 (New York: Shepherd Gallery, Associates, Inc., 1980), pp 1-30; Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism; Kselman, Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth Century France; and Flood, "The Catholic Church in Nineteenth Century France."

differences between corrupt religious art and true religious artistic goals.<sup>19</sup>

Catholic religious painting was to be symbolic Montalembert argued, borrowing from nature not objects to imitate but as signs of an idea. A painter or sculpture would use a human body to portray a saint, but the body was not to be portrayed in any sensual way. The body was the vehicle used by the artist to depict the saint who was faithful, martyred or used to symbolize an idea like chastity, steadfastness, purity, etc. Images should be frontal, immobile, and rectilinearly simple, with no sensuality at all. Louis-Alexandre Piel, an architect who later became a Dominican, defined it best when he wrote that there was a fundamental antagonism between the erotic and the beautiful, for "everything that favors continence is good and beautiful. . . and everything that leads to gratification of the flesh is bad and ugly."<sup>20</sup> The *bultos* of Our Lady of Solitude (Figure 2.10), Our Lady of Talpa (Figure 2.13) and Our Lady of the Rosary (Figure 2.14) from the Talpa Chapel all depict the Virgin with open arms. All three pieces, dating from the 1830s, exhibit characteristics counter to the ideals of the ultramontanes. The art of the Renaissance reflected naturalism, and naturalism was seen by the ultramontanes as reflecting all of the social evils of society. Naturalism was part of the ideology of progress and therefore unacceptable.

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<sup>19</sup>Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 61.

<sup>20</sup>Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 78.

From mid-century on, Byzantine art replaced the art of the Renaissance in churches. Fra Angelico was copied, mosaics were placed in domes of churches, and the subjects of the art included the life of Christ as a child with the Holy Family, the Flight into Egypt, the Virgin and Child, Mary Magdalen<sup>21</sup>, and the repentant prodigal son. Any attempt to portray Christ, the Virgin, Mary Magdalen or any of the saints in realistic, human terms was condemned by the Pope in the Syllabus of Errors as part of the "rational movement."

Examples of the dominant ultramontane artistic tradition can be seen in the works of the brothers Ary and Henry Scheffer, Hippolyte-Jean Flandrin and Ferdinand-Victor-Eugene Delacroix. In the works of Ary Scheffer, there was an upward turn of the head, eyes gazing toward heaven and an overall calm and harmony with no turbulent skies. Even the tragic subjects seem more sad than tragic. In "Replique of Saint Monica and Saint Augustine," the two figures calmly gaze into heaven with peaceful expressions. (Figure 3.4) In "Christ Weeping Over Jerusalem," the portrayal of Christ is more devotional than historic. Even in His sadness, a calm is found. (Figure 3.5)<sup>22</sup> This calm simplicity was the definition of ultramontane religious art.

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<sup>21</sup>The best work on Mary Magdalen and the changes in her representation in society and art is Susan Haskins, Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1993).

<sup>22</sup>Kashey, "Religious Art in Nineteenth Century France," pp. 11, 17-19; Christian Imagery in French Nineteenth Century Art 1789-1906 (New York: Shepherd Gallery, Associates, Inc., 1980), pp. 146-148, 152-153.

Flandrin, while dismissed in the twentieth-century, was in his lifetime generally regarded as being the most important religious artist working in France during the middle nineteenth-century. Even among the militant anti-clerics he won begrudging respect.<sup>23</sup> His style of severity, rectilinear stiffness and the lack of outward emotion can be seen in his works, "The Last Supper," "Christ giving Keys to St Peter," and "The Entrance into Jerusalem." (Figures, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8) All three topics are Biblically charged with emotion yet Flandrin manages to take all emotion out of the scenes. The human body is heavily draped. The joyful entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday is stripped of its almost frenzied celebration by Flandrin's stoic portrayal of the participants.

The industrial revolution with its resultant mass production, progress in the sciences, and the rise of an industrial bourgeoisie led to a desire for a more humanistic church. By the late 1870s there was a move in the conservative camp toward a more realistic portrayal of religious subjects. The result was progressive naturalization of the religious art.<sup>24</sup>

Christ performing biblical actions in a modern environment became subjects of paintings. One of the clearest examples from France is Leon Lhermitte's "L'Ami des humbles," painted in 1892. The theme is the Supper at Emmaus but it was placed in a peasant home in northern France. (Figure 3.9)

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<sup>23</sup>Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 123.

<sup>24</sup>Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 221.



LA SAINTE VIERGE

*Selon l'art prétendu religieux en France, depuis Louis XIV*

Figure 3.2 Engraving of *La Sainte Vierge* illustrated in Charles de Montalembert, *Du Vandalisme et du catholicisme dans l'art*, Paris, 1839. In Driskel, *Representing Belief*, p. 62.



LA SAINTE VIERGE  
*Selon l'art régénéré en Allemagne, au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*

Figure 3.3 Engraving of *La Sainte Vierge* illustrated in Charles de Montalembert, *Du Vandalisme et du catholicisme dans l'art*, Paris, 1839. In Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 62.

In popular religious art there was a move by the middle of the nineteenth-century to replace the old primitive statues with what became known as "Saint Sulpice art."<sup>25</sup> Mass produced plaster-cast or terra cotta painted in crude colors with saccharine and mindless expressions, the Saint-Sulpicen art reflected western culture's obsession with mass production.<sup>26</sup> Excluded from the faces of the saints and Virgin were any signs of pain or suffering and all were healthy and sexless. Often produced without defining attributes, saints were often interchangeable. Due to the enthusiasm felt for the industrial revolution by many of the priests who came from modest background the new statuary was heartily accepted. But not only the priests liked the new statuary. The number of flowers, ex-votos and candles left by the common people illustrate that the parishioners also liked the mass produced works.<sup>27</sup> Saint Sulpice art quickly became popular throughout the Catholic Church. Advertisements for this style of religious art can be found in the American editions of the Catholic Almanacs and Directories from 1877 through 1909 (Figures 3.10, 3.11, 3.12).

When Bishop Lamy made his way to Santa Fe and his new Bishopric, he took with him memories of the religious culture he had come from, a culture

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<sup>25</sup>The art was called Saint-Sulpice because it was sold in the commercial area that surrounded the church of Saint-Sulpice in Paris.

<sup>26</sup>Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism, p. 154; Driskel, Representing Beliefs, pp. 2-3.

<sup>27</sup>Gibson, Social History of French Catholicism, p.155.



Figure 3.4 *Replique of Saint Monica and Saint Augustine* by Ary Scheffer. In Christian Imagery in French Nineteenth Century Art 1789-1906, p. 147.





Figure 3.5 *Christ Weeping Over Jerusalem* by Ary Scheffer. In Christian Imagery in French Nineteenth Century Art 1789-1906, p. 153.

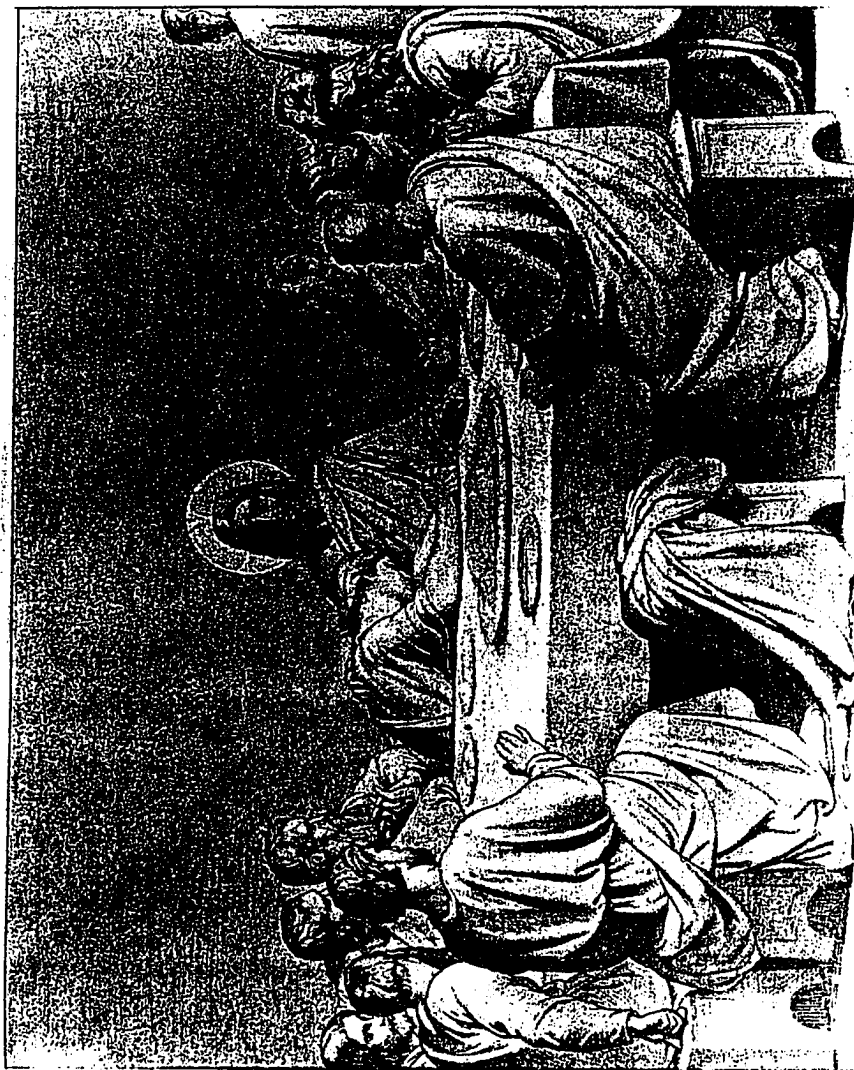


Figure 3.6 *The Last Supper* by Hippolyte Flandrin. In Driskel, *Representing Belief*, p. 126.

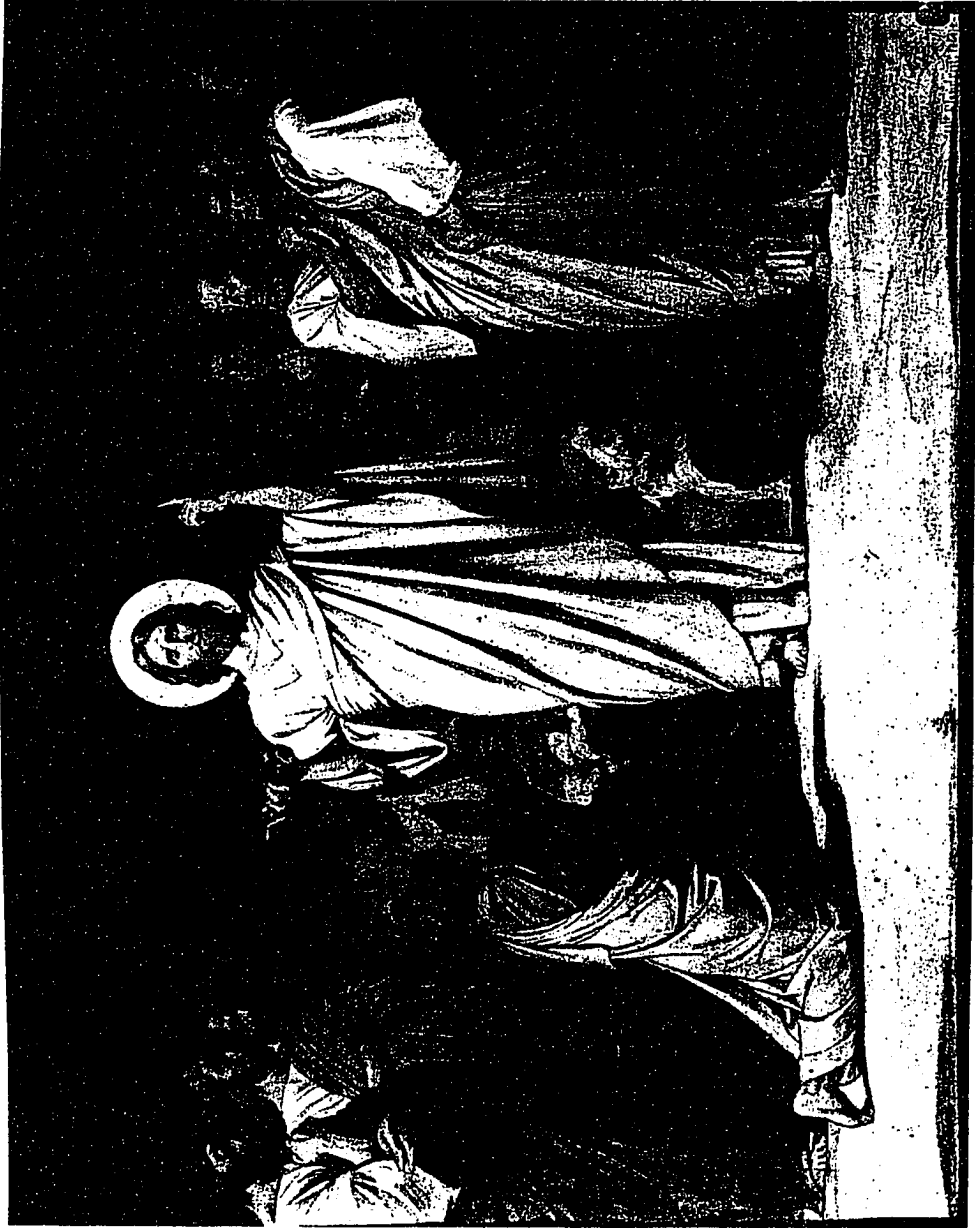


Figure 3.7 *Christ Giving Keys to St. Peter* by Hippolyte Flandrin, 1861. In Driskel, *Representing Belief*, p. 125.

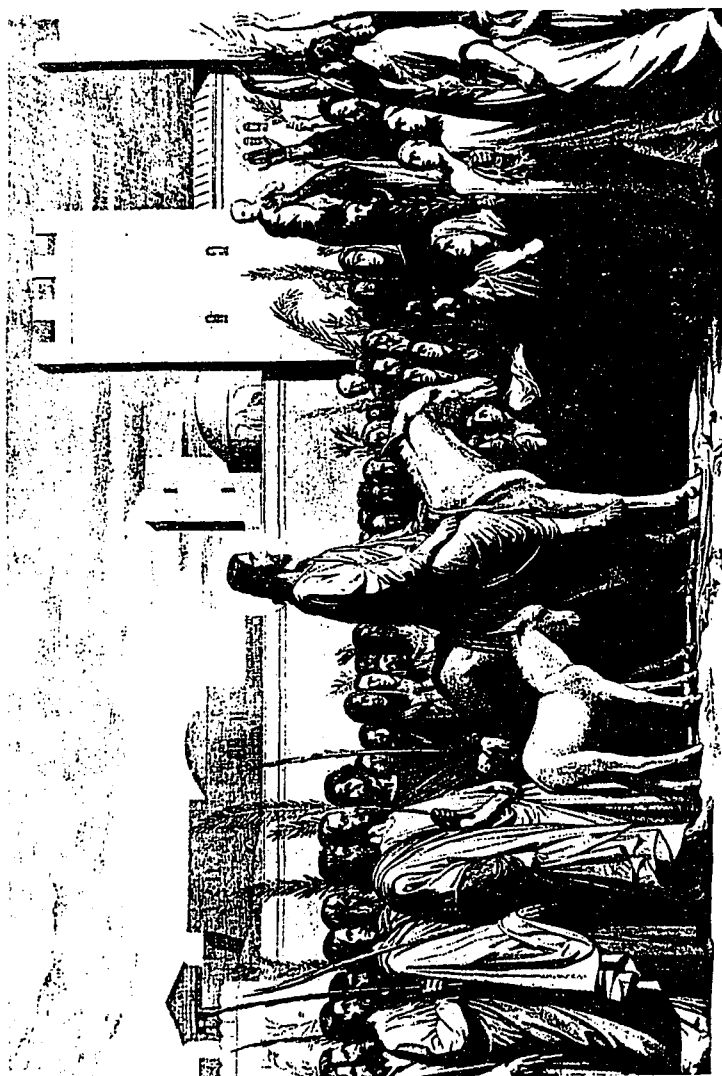


Figure 3.8 Engraving from *Entrance into Jerusalem* by Flandrin, 1842. In Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 127.



Figure 3.9 *L'Ami des humbles* by Léon Lhermitte, 1892. In Driskel, Representing Belief, p. 221.

*Publishing Houses.* 277

**FR. PUSTET.**

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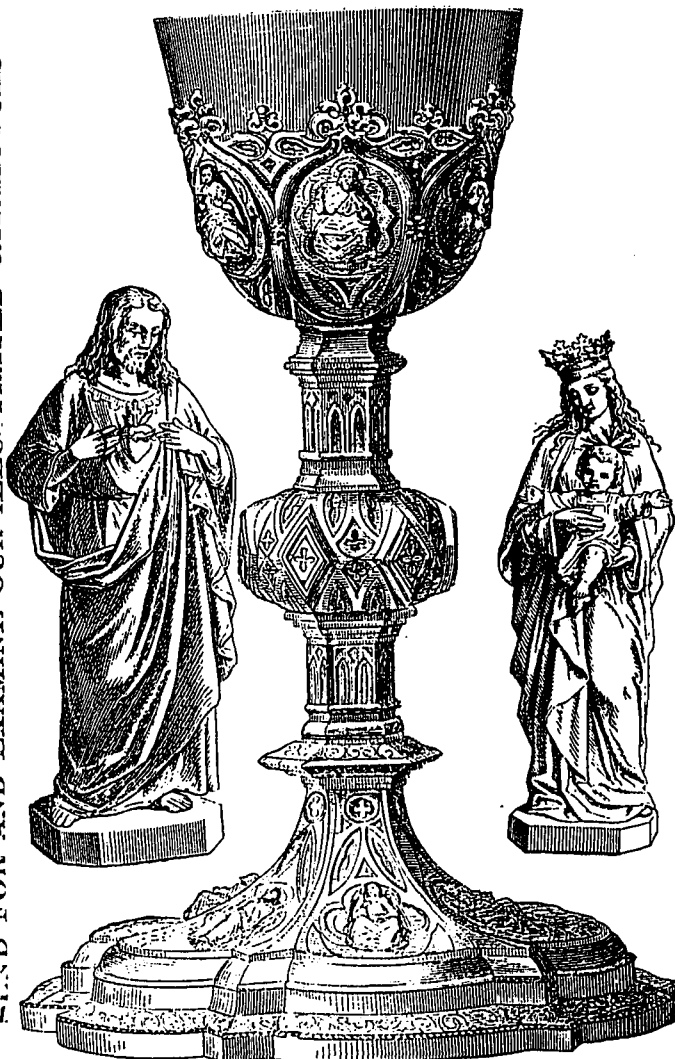


Catalogues sent free by mail.

Figure 3.10 Statuary available in 1877 to be purchased from advertisements found in Sadlier's Catholic Directory Almanac and Ordo New York: D and J Sadlier and Co., 1877), pp. 277, 2.

BENZIGER BROTHERS,  
NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, ST. LOUIS.

SEND FOR AND EXAMINE OUR ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUES



AND LATEST PRICE LISTS OF CHURCH GOODS.

Figure 3.11 Statuary available for purchase 1877.

Royal + Bavarian + Establishment.



MAYER & Co., of Munich, 149, New Bond Street, London,  
and 47, Barclay Street, New York.

Altars, Stations of the Cross, Calvary Groups,  
Statues, etc.

55

Figure 3.12 Statuary for purchase in 1895 from advertisements found in Sadlier's Catholic Directory Almanac and Ordo (New York: D and J Sadlier and Co., 1895), p. 55.



that, among other things, produced numerous old Gothic cathedrals built of stone with spires and stained glass windows in addition to ultramontane tastes for art which denied the sexuality of mankind and insisted upon the supremacy of the clergy, the unquestioned obedience of the parishoners and a spirituality which denied independent action. Santa Fe stood in stark contrast to this culture.

One of the most famous pieces of religious architecture in Santa Fe is the Cathedral of St. Francis built during the tenure of Archbishop Lamy. Designed in a neo-Romanesque style reminiscent of his home region, Lamy's Cathedral rose up as a worthy tribute to the glory of God in this new Archdiocese. Extensive research conducted by art historians, architects, and archeologists describe the transition of the adobe *Parroquia* (parish church) first used as the Bishop's home church to the stone edifice which now stands in its place.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>The best sources on the history of the *Parroquia* and the Cathedral are Fray Francisco Atansio Dominguez, The Mission of New Mexico, 1776, with other contemporary documents, edited and trans by Eleanor B. Adams and Fray Angelico Chavez (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1956); Bruce Ellis, Bishops Lamy's Santa Fe Cathedral (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985); Paul Horgan, Lamy of Santa Fe: His Life and Times (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1975); John L. Kessell, The Missions of New Mexico Since 1776 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980); Lamy Memorial: Centenary of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe: 1850 - 1950 (Santa Fe: Schifani Brothers Printing Co., Inc., 1950); Marc Treib, Sanctuaries of Spanish New Mexico (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Fray Angelico Chavez, The Cathedral of the Royal City of the Holy Faith of St. Francis (n.p., 1947); and Fray Angelico Chavez, The Santa Fe Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi (Santa Fe: Schifani Brothers Printing Co., Inc., 1987). In nineteenth century writings, there is little reference given to the building of the Cathedral. Rev. James H. Defouri, Historical Sketch of the Catholic Church in New Mexico (San Francisco: McCormick Bros., 1887), pp. 143-46; L. Bradford Prince, Spanish Mission Churches of New Mexico (Cedar Rapids, IA: The Torch

The *Parroquia* drawn by the American Lieutenant J.W. Abert in 1846 shows the adobe sides of the church and the twin towers with the bell above (Figure 3.13). In his description he also mentioned the interior its large number of niches and mirrors on the high altar with two statues of friars, one in white, the other in blue. The statues were in fact wooden statues of St. Francis (in blue) and St. Dominic in his white habit. After the new Cathedral was built the chapel in the mining town of Golden south of Madrid received the *bulto* of St. Francis and St. Dominic found its way to the newly rebuilt mission church of Santo Domingo Pueblo.

By 1867 the *Parroquia* had been partially renovated. The tall towers had been replaced by heavier towers and crenilation was added to the top of the walls. The Chapel to Our Lady of the Rosary, of the Conquest, *La Conquistadora* extended to the left of the chapel (Figure 3.14).<sup>29</sup> In this chapel the oldest statue was on the altar. Our Lady of the Rosary was brought by the original settlers to New Mexico saved during the Pueblo uprising and returned with the Spanish in 1680.

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<sup>29</sup>Throughout all of Spanish America, the first image of Mary that came to a pioneer city was given the title, *La Conquistadora*, Our Lady of Conquest. By the end of the nineteenth-century the chapel had been white washed and dedicated to the Sacred Heart. Under Archbishop Edwin Vincent Bryne (1943-1963), the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary, *La Conquistadora* was restored using odd pieces of the old high altar.

The Cathedral as designed by Archbishop Lamy was built of stone, stained glass, a rose window, and towers all similar to the French Midi-Romanesque style of Lamy's home cathedral in Clermont-Ferrand (Figure 3.15). Lamy also wanted to add the twin towers and cupola of the stone cathedral in Chihuahua in northern Mexico. The architect planned for them on top but they were in fact never built.

The current Cathedral was begun in 1869 and blessed in 1886 (Figure 3.16). Lamy's Midi-Romanesque Cathedral was now complete. The completed Cathedral was the outward artistic sign of the French church and culture. The pastoral letters with their emphasis upon perfection, patronage, clerical discipline, feast days of obligation, ecclesiastical dress, diocesan discipline, and the proper way to celebrate Lent highlight the liturgical changes desired.<sup>30</sup>

While the Cathedral is the most well known, an even a better example of the complete transference of the French culture to Santa Fe can be seen in the Chapel of Our Lady of Light built by the Loretto Sisters. Following the lead of Bishop Lamy, the sisters turned to Europe to find a design for their chapel. Lamy had begun the construction of his Cathedral in 1869. He had chosen a Romanesque revival style for the Cathedral but that style would have been too heavy for the smaller chapel. The sisters chose to use the same architects,

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<sup>30</sup>AASF, Loose Documents, Pastoral Letters 1854 #2, #3; 1855 #2; 1857 #3; 1858 #4; 1859 #10; 1860 #5; 1963 #2; 1864 #1; 1865 #4; 1869 #3; 1870 #4; 1872 #2; 1873 #5; 1880 #1; 1885 #1, UNM, Albuquerque, NM.

Antoine Mouly and his son Projectus who were brought to Santa Fe by Lamy, to design a Gothic revival chapel. They also used many of the same Italian and French stonemasons and had their stone quarried from the same sources as Bishop Lamy.<sup>31</sup> The priest in charge of Cathedral construction was also placed in of the chapel.<sup>32</sup> On July 25, 1873, the oratory was begun with the first stones cut on January 19, 1874. Quarried sandstone used to build the chapel came from the summit of Cerro Colorado near Lamy, New Mexico, and the porous volcanic tufa used for the ceiling vaults came from Cerro Mogino, located twelve miles west of Santa Fe.<sup>33</sup> On July 12, 1875 the Daily New Mexican noted the progress of the chapel and proclaimed that, "When it is finished it will be one of the permanent ornaments of the ancient city and a monument of great credit to the enterprise of its planner."<sup>34</sup>

When the chapel was dedicated on April 25, 1878, the Daily New Mexican said the chapel "symbolized the arrival of education and a special kind

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<sup>31</sup>The French contractor Coulloudon, from Limoges, France had come to Santa Fe hearing about the construction projects in Paris. He comments in a letter to his wife dated 1874 that everyone spoke French in Santa Fe. He described the stonecutters as being Auvergnots and "the rest Frenchmen." Straw, Loretto Chapel, Note #16, p.49.

<sup>32</sup>For the best and most complete work on the construction of the Chapel of Our Lady of Light see Mary J. Straw, Loretto: The Sisters and Their Santa Fe Chapel (Santa Fe: West America Publishing, 1983).

<sup>33</sup>Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 41.

<sup>34</sup>The Daily New Mexican, 12 July 1875.

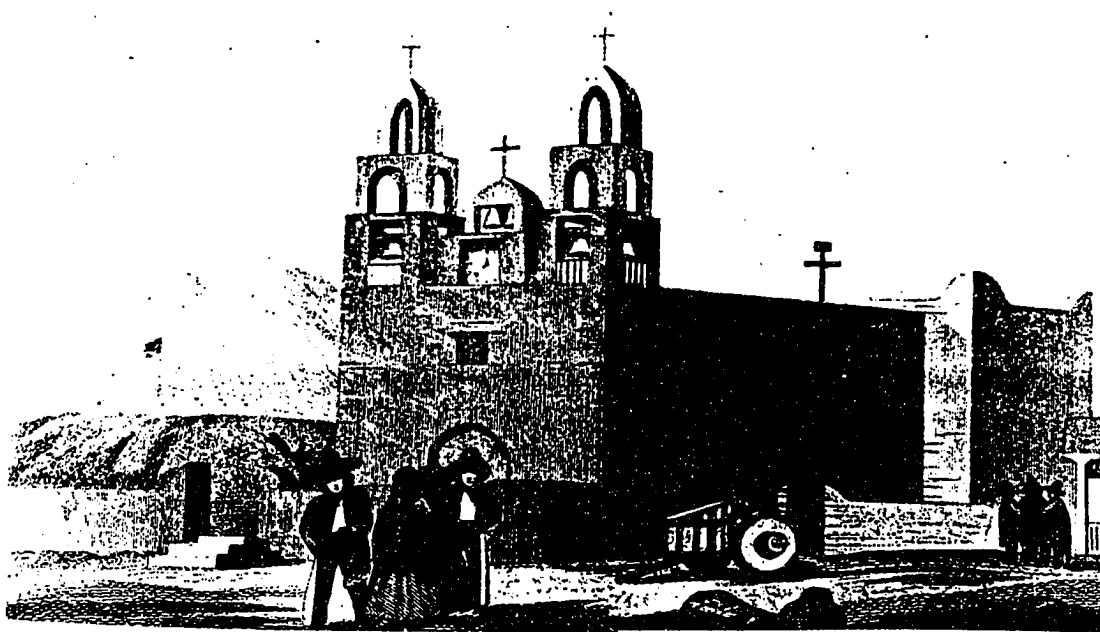


Figure 3.13 The *Parroquia* in 1846 after a sketch by Lt. J.W. Abert. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 21257.

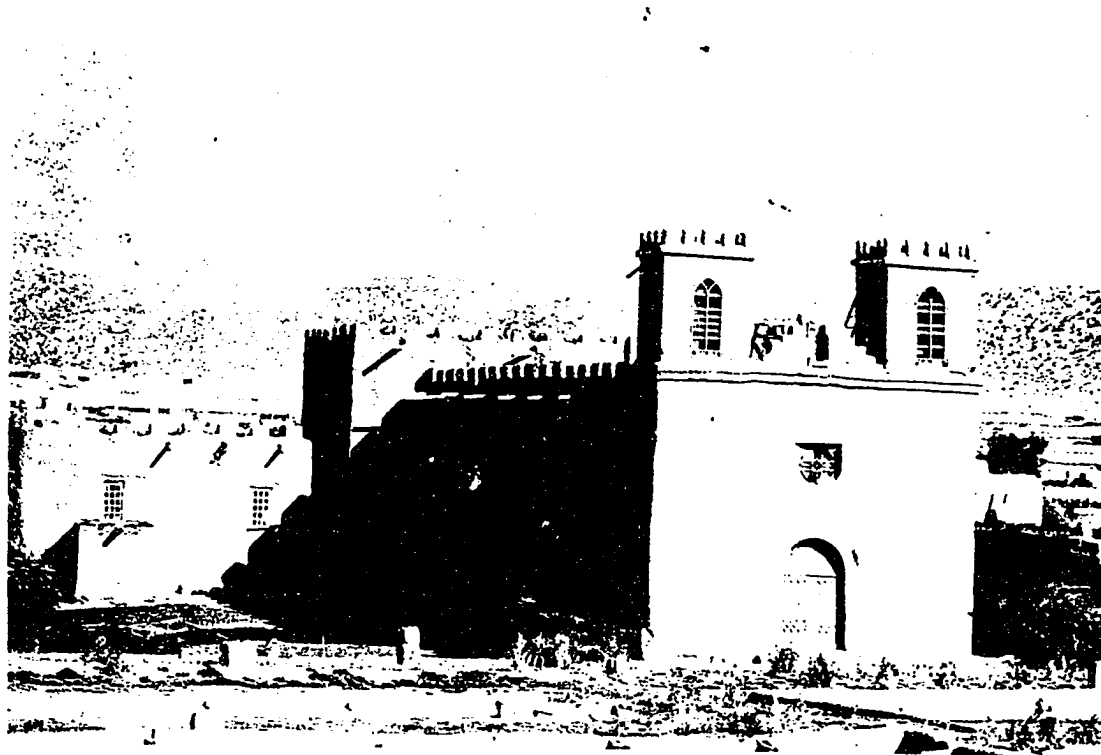


Figure 3.14 Partially remodeled and wholly crenelated, the *Parroquia* around 1867. The chapel of *La Conquistadora* extends to the left. Photo by Nicholas Brown. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 55484.

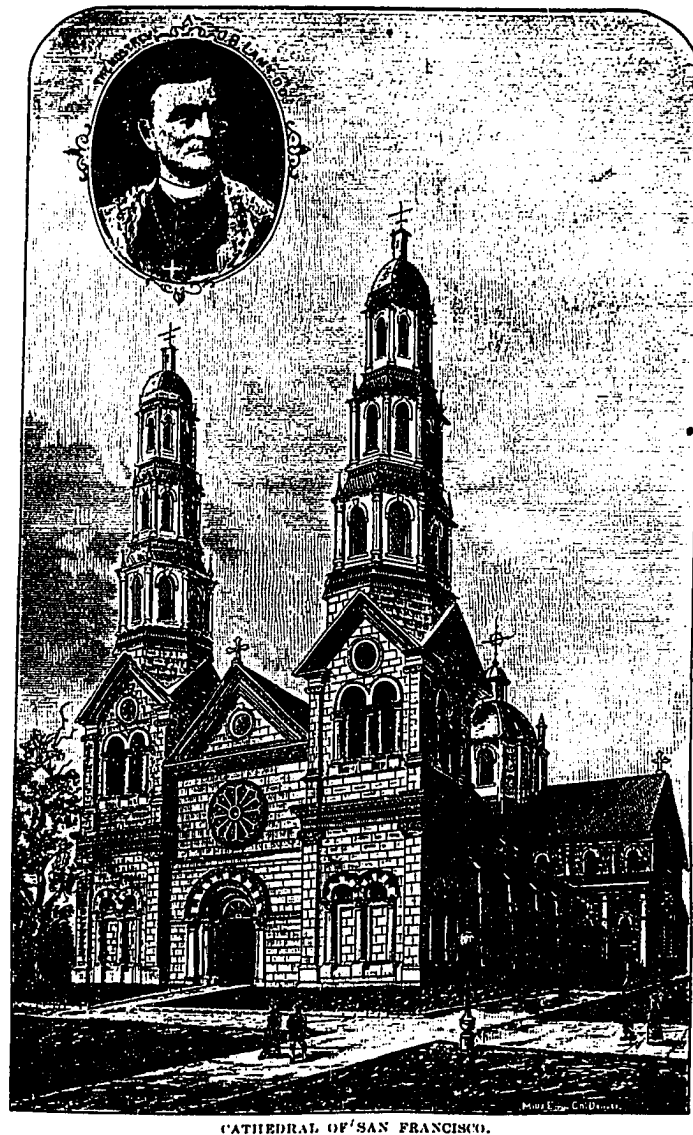


Figure 3.15 Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy and originally planned St. Francis Cathedral from Aztlan by William G. Ritch (1885). Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 10005.

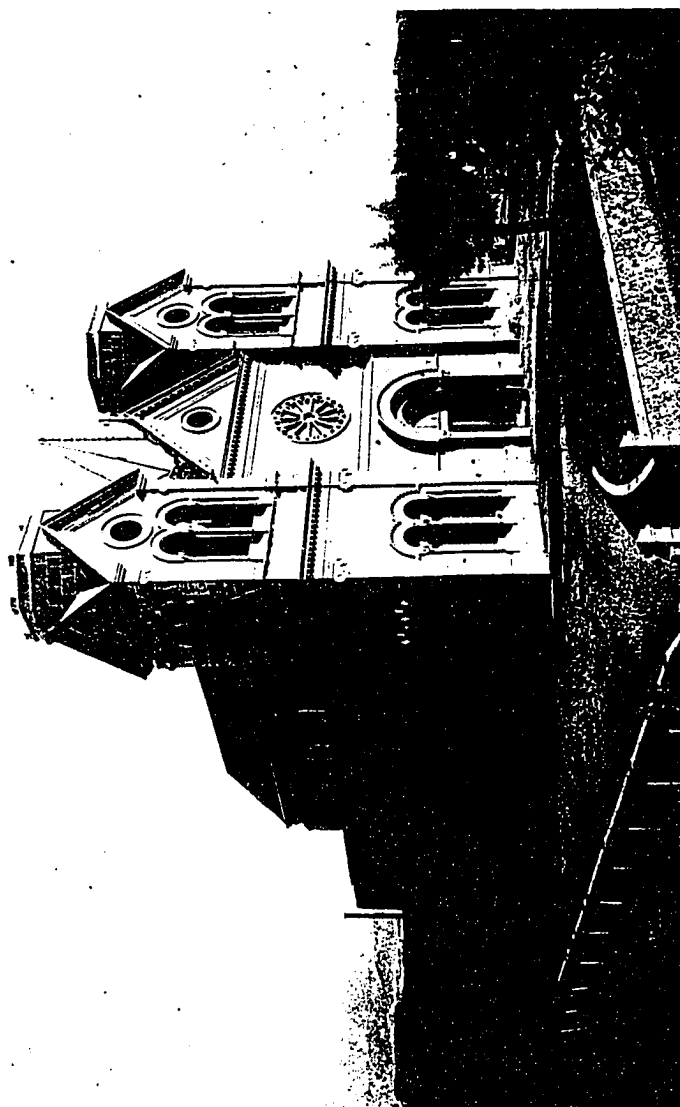


Figure 3.16 St. Francis Cathedral, Santa Fe, New Mexico ca 1888. Photo by Dana B. Chase. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 56975.



of culture to a region which had desperately needed both. It brought a group of dedicated women for special service in an area still remote. It gave the Catholic Church a new weapon in its fight against ignorance and sin."<sup>35</sup>

According to tradition, the sisters patterned their chapel after the Sainte-Chapelle chapel in Paris. Comparing the two chapels, the chapel in Santa Fe can be seen as a Gothic revival of the earlier chapel without the open porch and lower story.<sup>36</sup> Architecturally the lines created a vertical thrust, culminating in peaks and points, which is why Gothic architecture is called "pointed" architecture. The roof slope is fifty-eight feet to its ridge and it was covered with terneplate (eighty percent lead and twenty percent tin) which was typical for the turn of the century. The roof had fishscale shingles with the numerous dormers intersecting the roof and topped by finials of fleurs de lis, a three petaled motif which symbolized the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary and France. Examining the ornate front or west facade of the Chapel it is possible to see the dominant characteristics of Gothic architecture: the pointed arches, pinnacles, buttresses and the rose window (Figure 3.17). The nine and a half feet high front doors, were made of pine and decorated with a single-pointed leaf motif.

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<sup>35</sup>The Daily New Mexican, April 25, 1878 as quoted in Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 20.

<sup>36</sup>See Wanda Rabaud, The Sainte-Chapelle: An Historical Guide (Paris: Societe D'Editions Artistique, n.d.); Louis Grodecki, Sainte-Chapelle (Paris: Caisse National des Monuments Historiques, n.p.); Marcel Aubert, The Art of the High Gothic Era (New York: Crown Publishing, Inc., 1963); and Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 60.

The rest of the doors in the chapel have a trefoil leaf pattern which in Christian art symbolizes the Trinity.<sup>37</sup>

Inside the chapel a thirty-four foot high four-vault system ends in the east or altar area in a vaulted apse of three sides. The four arches rest upon five single Corinthian pilasters lining the north and south walls of the nave. The pilasters are crowned with gilded capitals of acanthus leaves, caulicoli (a stalk) with a honeycomb blossom, and four petaled blossoms with foliage (Figure 3.20). In the rear there are two free standing Corinthian columns with gilded capitals of acanthus leaves supporting the choir loft.<sup>38</sup> Typical of the Gothic revival style, while the space is small the high, upward moving lines create a sense of space and movement towards heaven. Upon entering the chapel, through the front doors and under the Rose window the chapel opens up to a vaulted ceiling and the choir loft is in the back, accessed by a staircase.

Stained glass windows were new to Santa Fe. Like many other forms of religious art the windows were for the purpose of telling stories or showing the "simple people" the meaning of the Scriptures and what they were to believe.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Straw, Loretto Chapel, pp. 64-66; Aubert, Art of High Gothic Era.

<sup>38</sup>Straw, Loretto Chapel, pp. 66-68.

<sup>39</sup>Joan M. Scobey, Stained Glass: Traditions and Techniques (New York: The Dial Press, 1979), pp. 22-23.

The Loretto chapel had six windows installed.<sup>40</sup> In the front of the nave weretwo canopied depictions. One is of St. Catherine of Alexandria, the patron of girl students and of virgins. She is holding a palm and a broken spiked wheel at her side. These were the signs of her martyrdom. The other window is of St. Stanislas, the patron of novices, who is seen holding a child (Figure 3.19). These windows came from the studios of Atelier Des Grange, Clermont-Ferrand, France, and were made in 1874. Clermont-Ferrand was the home of the bishop.

The Sanctuary has two windows depicting the four Evangelists made in Paris at the DuBois Studios in 1876 (Figure 3.20). The DuBois Studios in Paris also made the facade window with the Alpha and Omega below the Greek Cross. The Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet indicating the beginning and the end and were ancient symbols of Christ. They are all in gold on a crimson background. Above the Alpha and Omega is a quatrefoil of blue and gold. Inside is a true Chi Rho, the Greek letter for X and P with the Greek Cross.<sup>41</sup> The rose window spans eight feet with the tracery of the window radiating twelve petals, symbolic of the twelve apostles. At the

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<sup>40</sup>The six windows installed were grisaille windows. In a grisaille window the glass, lightly tinted and painted with foliage patterns or geometrics and leaded into unique patterns, was less expensive than other stained glass windows. Scobey, Stained Glass, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup>This cross was found in the catacombs of early Christianity. The Chi Rho is the most ancient of sacred monograms for the word "Christ" and may also be read as the Latin word "pax" meaning peace. F. R. Webber, Church Symbolism (Cleveland: J. H. Jansen, publisher, 1938), p. 92.

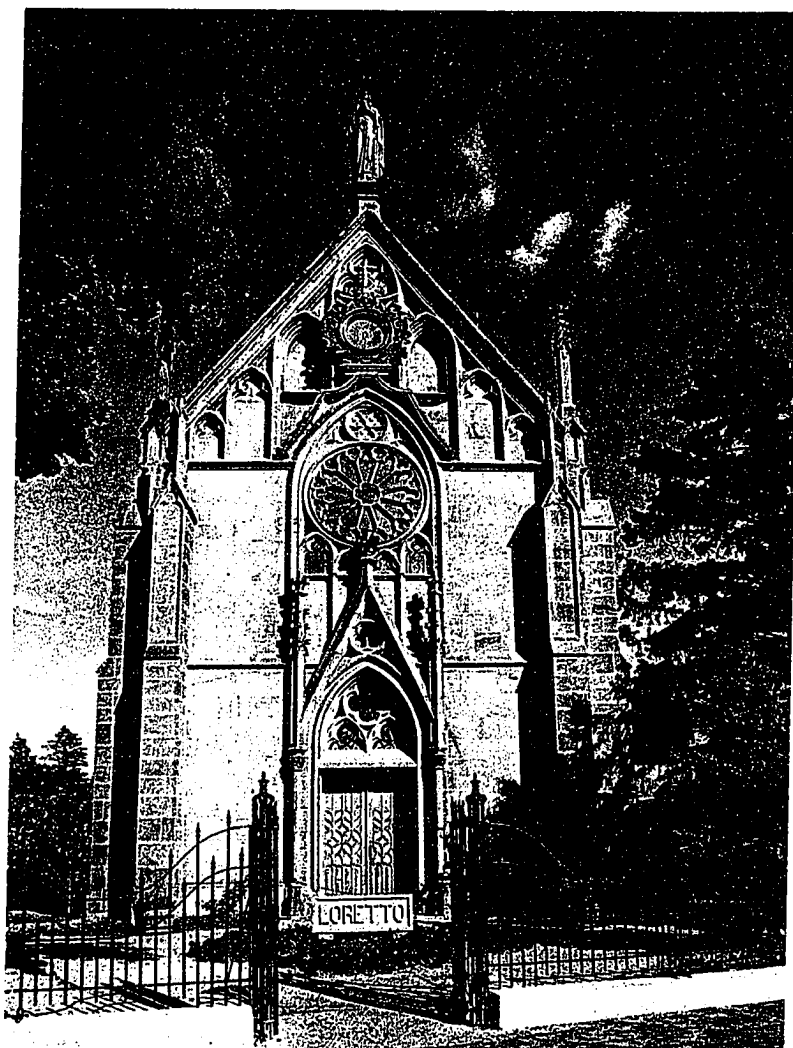


Figure 3.17 Facade of the Our Lady of Light (Loretto Chapel). Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, # 47444399.

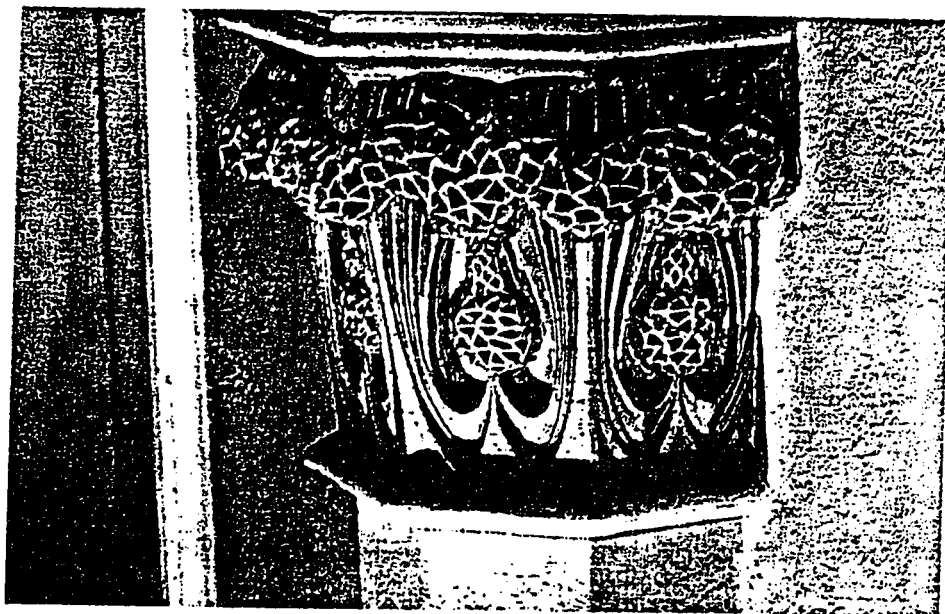
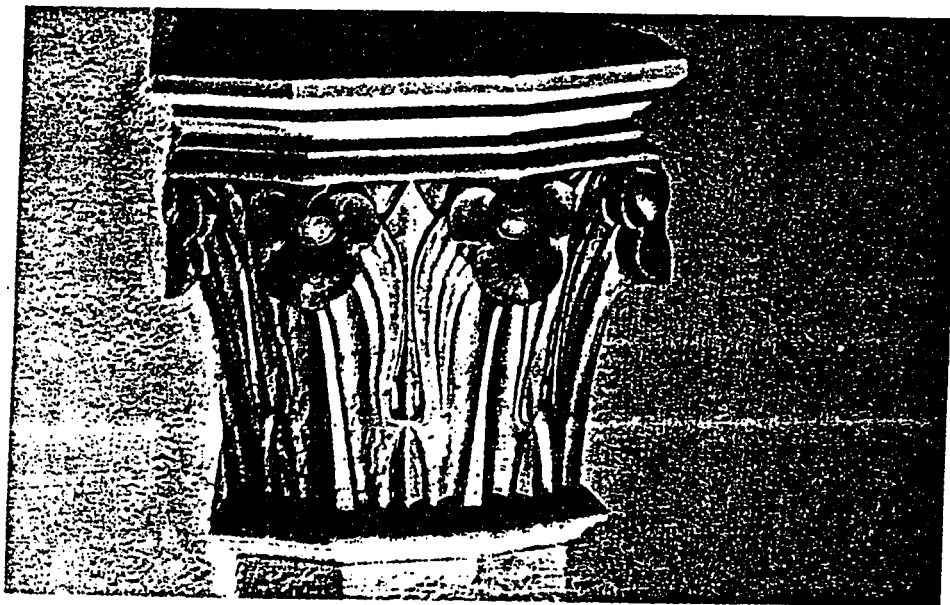


Figure 3.18 Pilaster Capitals of the Loretto Chapel. In Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 66.

center is a gold quatrefoil eye bearing the crowned monogram of the Virgin. Trefoils are interspersed between the petal tips (Figure 3.21)<sup>42</sup> Like the apse vaults in France of the nineteenth century, the vault of the Loretto chapel is of a gilded red in a design reminiscent of a Byzantine mosaic. Above the altar and on each wall are mosaic tiles with symbolic depictions representing the Holy Mass (Figures 3.22, 3.23). On the left is the Pelican in Her Piety (plucking open her breast feeding her young with her blood) symbolizing the redeeming Christ. In the center behind the altar and almost covered from view is the Lamb with the banner of Victory symbolizing the Resurrected Christ and on the right is a Fish and a loaf of Bread symbolizing the Eucharist. Below the two small sanctuary windows are two monograms, also mosaics (Figure 3.23). One is "OSJ" and the other "OSM" representing the Loretto standard of "O Suffering Jesus, O Sorrowful Mary." To the side of the altar are found two statues, one of the Virgin and the other of St Joseph with the baby Jesus each, an example of the Saint Sulpice artistic style mentioned earlier in the chapter (Figure 3.24).<sup>43</sup> Finally, the Gothic altar and communion rail with white marblized painting was made in Italy and the communion table installed and dedicated to the memory of Mother Magdalen Hayden, the first Superior of the Sisters of Loretto in Santa Fe

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<sup>42</sup>Straw, Loretto Chapel, pp. 68-69; Webber, Church Symbolism.

<sup>43</sup>Dates differ on these statues. The best guess is around the turn of the century (1895-1910) and were made by Daprato Statuary Company. Straw, Loretto Chapel, pp. 69-71.



Figure 3.19 Stained glassed windows of St. Catherine of Alexandria and St. Stanislas in the Loretto Chapel. Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, #11125981.

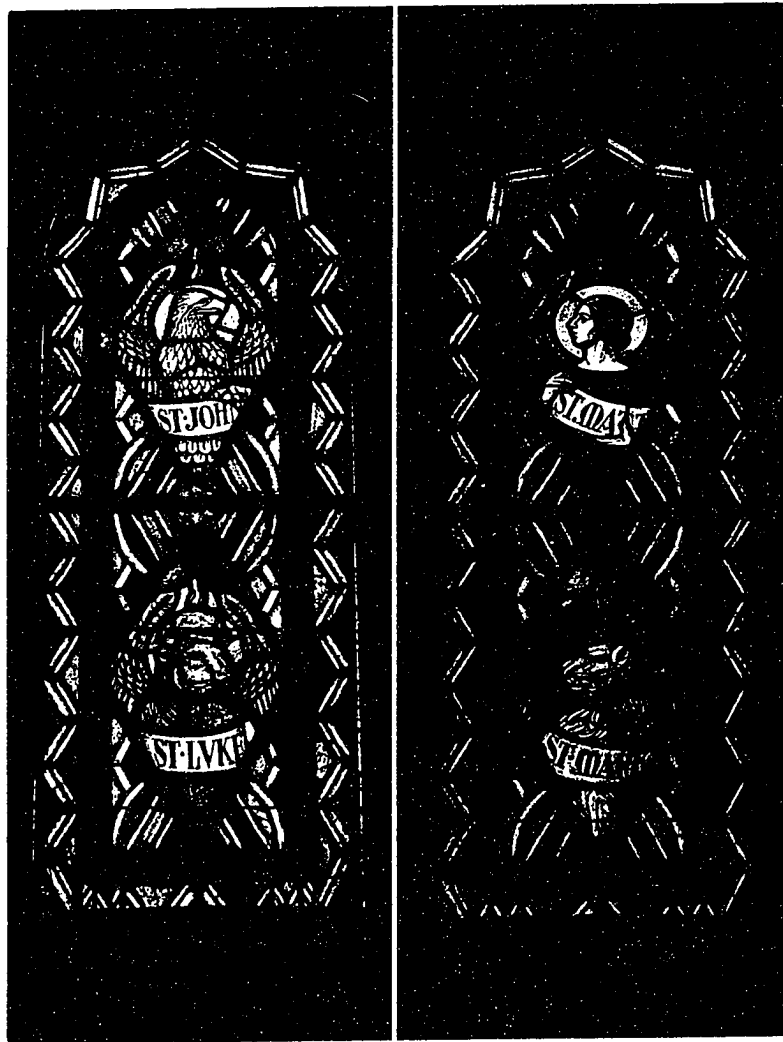


Figure 3.20 Stained glass windows of the Evangelists in the Loretto Chapel.  
Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, # 11125980.



sometime around the turn of the century (1895-1910) depicts the Last Supper of Leonardo da Vinci (Figure 3.23).<sup>44</sup> From 1878 to 1892 the exterior remained the same. In 1901 a metal roof was placed on the chapel and in 1887 the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes with her hands in a praying position was placed atop the Chapel (Figure 3.17). The statue, made in Paris by the firm J. Daniel, is three meters (9.84 feet) high and was dedicated on May 19, 1888. Taken as a whole, the Loretto Chapel presents in one place a number of examples of French artistic influences.

While the architect, stonemasons, workmen, and the art were all from France, the financing of the Chapel was local. The Chapel cost thirty thousand dollars. According to the records of the Loretto Sisters most of the funds came from three Spanish land-holding, sheep-raising families of New Mexico: The Cháves, Pereas, and the Montoyas. Sr. Stanislaus Chávas, sister of Doña Mercedes Cháves de Lamy (wife of the Bishop's nephew) and the daughter of the powerful Cháves (and by marriage Armijo) family, contributed her estate in her will of 1867. Sr. Lucia Pera, born to Juan Perea and Josefa Cháves Perea of Bernalillo, had donated twenty-five thousand dollars to the Sisters by October 1873, and Srs. Angela and Rosalia Montoya, daughters of Juan and Petra Perea de Montoya of Bernalillo contributed eighteen thousand dollars.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 71.

<sup>45</sup>From the Loretto Motherhouse Archives, Nerinx, Kentucky quoted in Straw, Loretto Chapel, p. 50.



Figure 3.21 The Rose window and stained glass of Alpha and Omega above the front door of Chapel. Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, # 27415538.

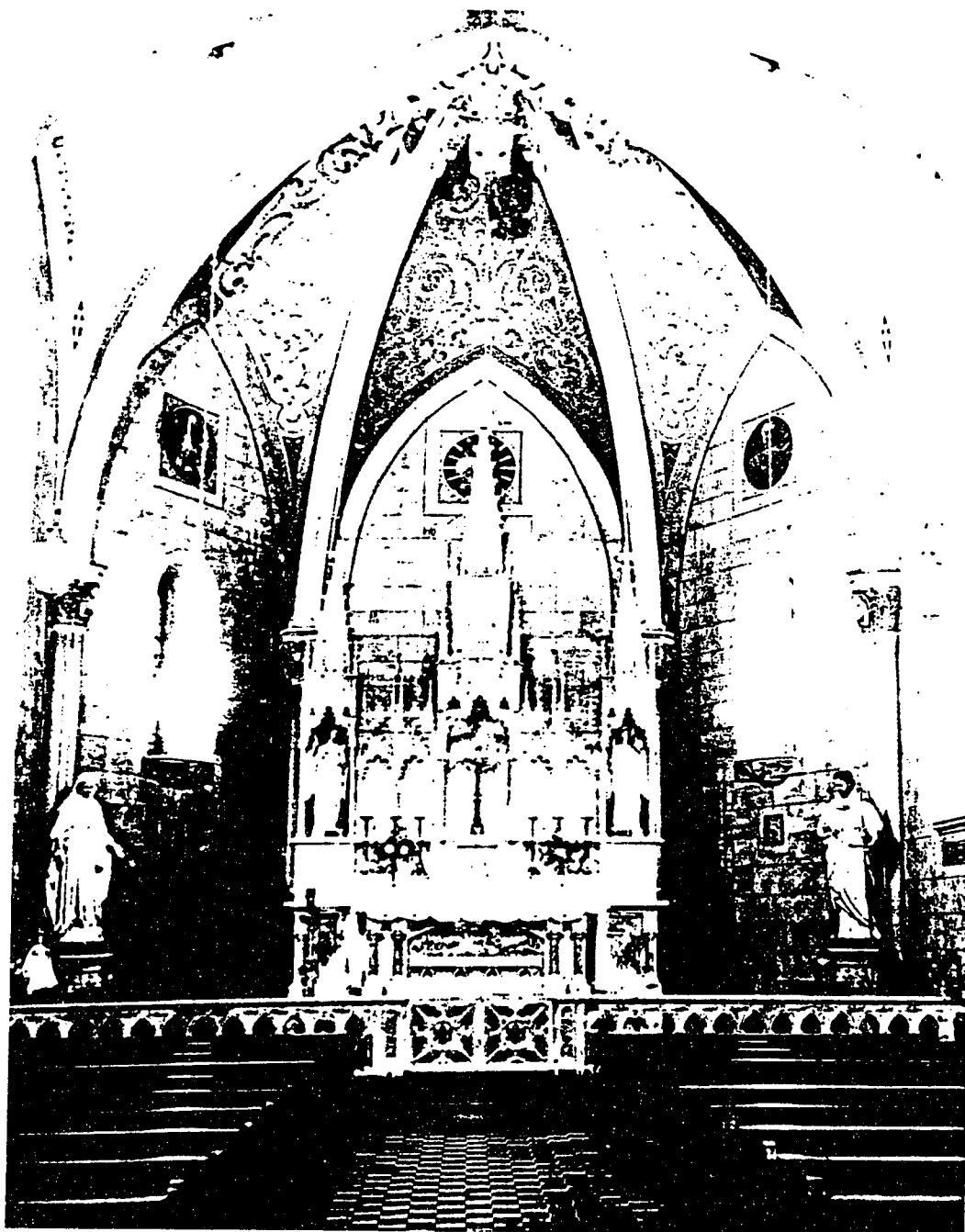


Figure 3.22 Altar of the Chapel ca 1895. Photo from Loretto Motherhouse Archives. In Straw, *Loretto Chapel*, p. 70. Note the mosaic design in the dome and the three circular mosaics at the top of the archs (described in the text).

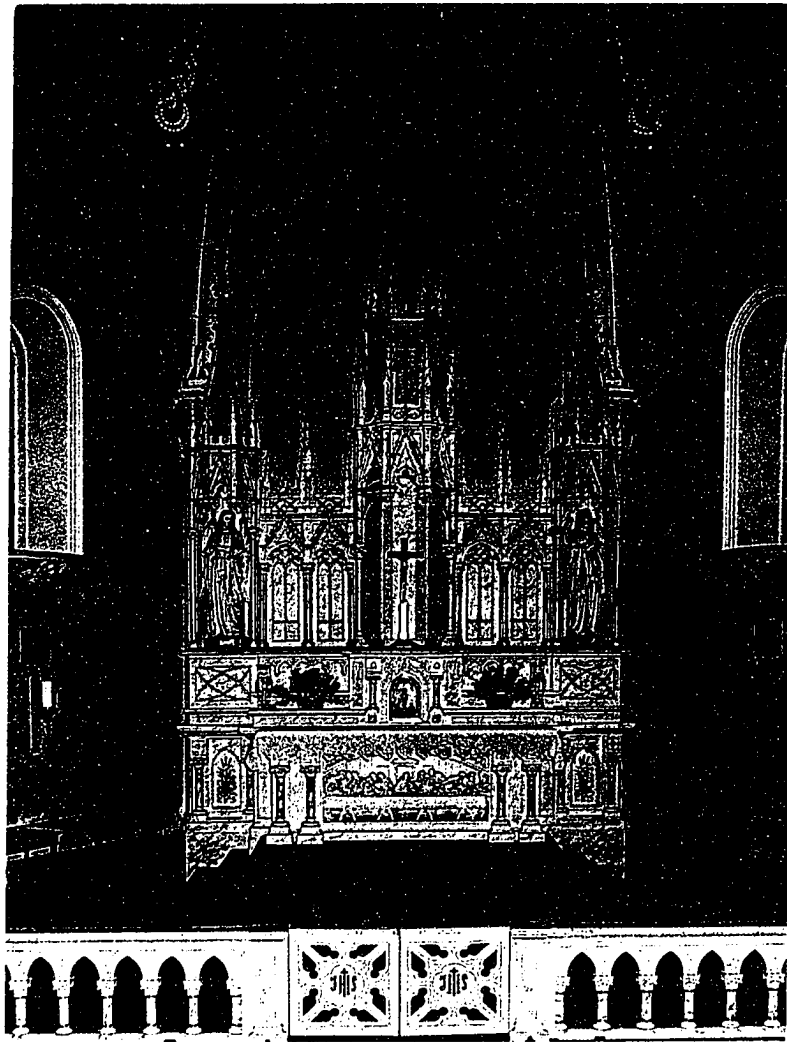


Figure 3.23 Gothic designed altar in Loretto Chapel (described in text). The mosaics are clearer. Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, # 21141253.



Figure 3.24 Statues of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph with the Christ child. Photo by Sarbo, Albuquerque, New Mexico, # 11125979.

All of these New Mexican families were powerful, wealthy landowners and their ties to the Catholic church continued into the American period despite the change in the hierarchy. The American/French clergy were connections to the new regime. Many of the New Mexican families had economic ties with the United States before conquest. They were the political and economic elite of the region. They were also members of the core group which petitioned for statehood. There was no reason to believe they would not support the new clergy coming into New Mexico.

Typical of Spanish religious tradition, when a daughter entered religious life a dowry came to the community with the girl. The Loretto Sisters who came to New Mexico from the motherhouse of the Loretto community in Kentucky were without large economic resources. It was from the dowries and additional gifts from the wealthy families of the new girls making their vows to this community that funded the chapel. Completed and blessed on April 25, 1878, by Vicar-General Peter Eguillon, the Loretto Chapel was built and paid for with New Mexican Hispanic money.

It certainly looked different from the rest of the churches in Santa Fe. It was a truly French chapel in a Spanish countryside. In 1881 Lieutenant John G. Bourke commented on the chapel when he and a friend visited:

No one answered our repeated pull on the bell, so we assumed the right to enter the Chapel, the loveliest piece of church architecture in the Southwest country. The nave is an original arch of great beauty, leading to the steps of the main altar in front of which hangs a very large lamp of

solid silver. A very well built geometrical stairway leads to the choir where the sisters sing. . . . affords me much pleasure to see this lovely little temple, so sweet, so pure and bright, attesting the constant presence and attention of refined and gentle womanhood - far different from the damp dark mouldy recesses of San Francisco, San Miguel or Guadalupe [chapels].<sup>46</sup>

So it stood, this little French chapel among the adobe buildings of Santa Fe, until the completion of the Cathedral, the only outward example of the new Catholic Church that had come to New Mexico (Figure 3.25). Stone and plaster, stained glass and marble reflected the forward movement of the American (French) Catholic church of the nineteenth-century.

Santa Fe, as the capital of the territory and the center of trade, commerce, and the new Catholic diocese, exhibited a large amount of French influence in its religious art and architecture. The Cathedral and the Our Lady of Light (Loretto Chapel) rose as monuments to this influence. The architecture, drawing upon the Midi-Romanesque style familiar to Lamy in his hometown and the popular style of the Chapel of Saint Chapelle in Paris for the Loretto Chapel, was the result of Lamy's dream of a grand cathedral (Figure 3.16). The interior of the Loretto Chapel was the result of prevailing tastes. The American nuns influenced by their Bishop and what was found in their own churches in America filled their chapel with pieces reflecting nineteenth-century French tastes.

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<sup>46</sup>John G. Bourke, "Bourke on the Southwest VII," ed. Lansing B. Bloom, New Mexico Historical Review X #4 (October 1935): 318-319.

In 1840, Santa Fe trail leader, Josiah Gregg wrote:

In architecture, the people do not seem to have arrived at any great perfection....The materials generally used for building are of the crudest possible description; consisting of unburnt bricks...laid on mortar of mere clay and sand. These bricks are called *adobes*, and every edifice, from chapel to the palacio, is constructed all of the same stuff. In fact, I should remark, perhaps that though all Southern Mexico is celebrated for the magnificence and wealth of its churches, New Mexico deserves equal fame for poverty-stricken and shabby-looking houses of public worship.<sup>47</sup>

After American conquest, and the French clergy who entered New Mexico also viewed adobe architecture with disdain. Seeing their mission as no less than the introduction of civilization to the people of the territory, they immediately began remodeling religious structures.<sup>48</sup> To use adobe for sacred space, which for the Catholic included churches, oratories, private chapels, shrines, altars, relics and cemeteries, was contrary to the French sense of culture. Hispanic adobe churches and chapels could not provide the proper ecclesiastical spirit needed for "proper" worship.

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<sup>47</sup>Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairie*, ed. Max L. Moorhead (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p.144.

<sup>48</sup>Mort Rosenblum, *Mission to Civilize: The French Way* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), pp. 7-8, argues that nineteenth century French cultural attitudes as a whole "ordered itself on a *mission civilisatrice*, a mission to civilize....The watchword is a verb that entered the language in 1568 *civiliser*, to oppose barbarity. Two centuries later, the French coined *civilisation* and never gave up rights to it." The word "civilization" is still the preferred French noun used for culture. A. L. Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, "Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions", *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology*, Harvard University, Vol 47 #1 (Cambridge, MA: The Museum, 1952), pp. 11, 147.



If it was not possible to build a completely new structure as in the case of The Cathedral of St. Francis, and the Loretto Chapel, the French clergy attempted to lay a veneer of French civilization and taste on top of the Hispanic frame.<sup>49</sup>

The Cathedral of St. Francis, the home of the Bishop and the diocese and the Loretto Chapel, home of the American nuns were outward signs of the civilization being brought to this region and found their expression fulfilled in the political, economic and ecclesiastical center of the New Mexican territory.

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<sup>49</sup>James Talamadge Moore, Through Fire and Flood: The Catholic Church in Frontier Texas, 1836-1900 (College Station, TX: Texas A and M University Press, 1992), p. 183.

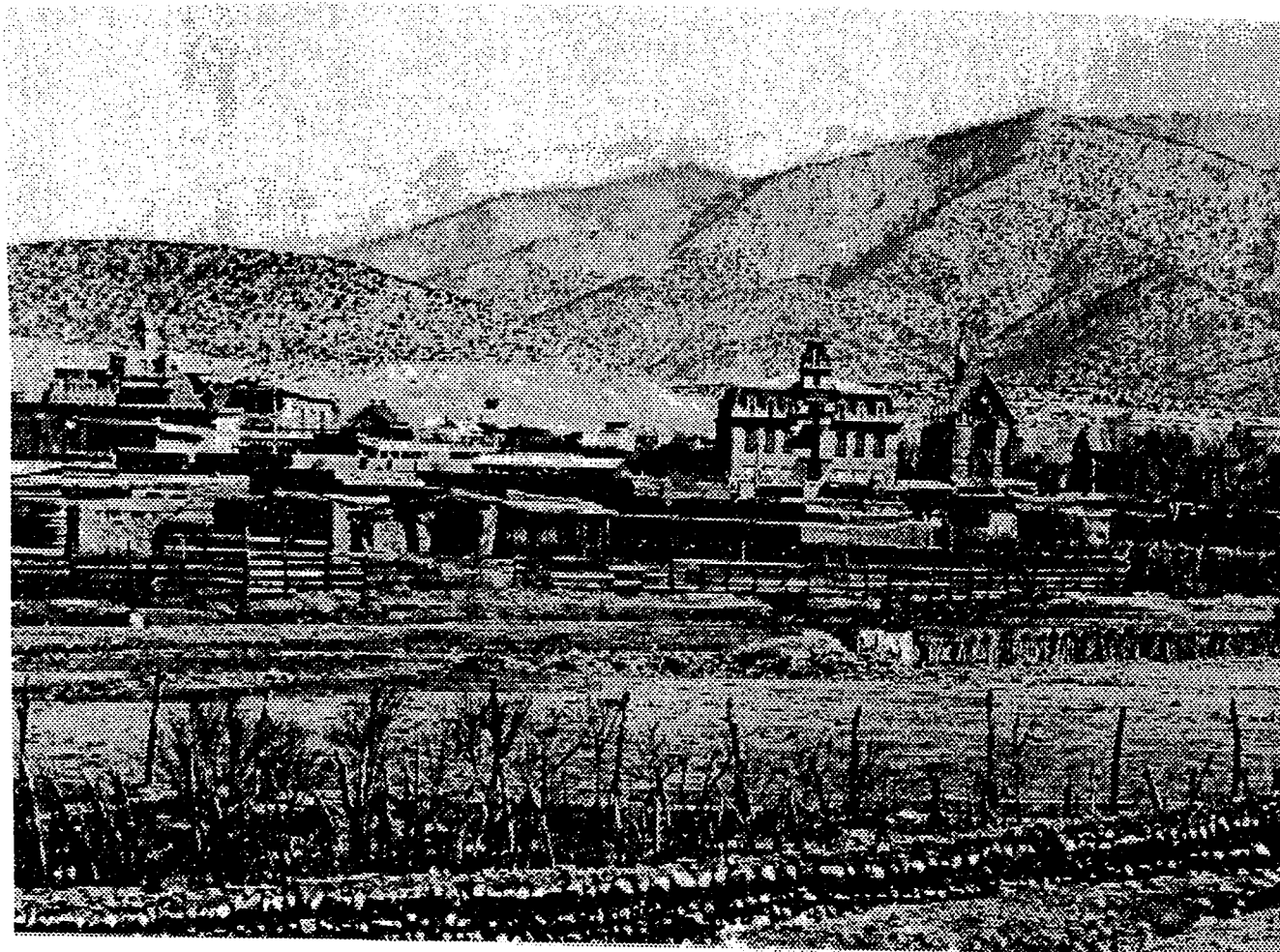


Figure 3.25 Santa Fe, New Mexico ca 1882. To the right is the Loretto Chapel and to the extreme left is the unfinished St. Francis Cathedral. Photo by Ben Wittick. Courtesy E. Dana Johnson Collection.



RELIGIOUS ART:  
REFLECTORS OF CHANGE IN THE  
CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NEW MEXICO, 1830-1910

VOLUME II

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
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Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

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## CHAPTER 4

### SANTA CRUZ DE LA CAÑADA

Twenty miles north of Santa Fe in a fertile valley watered by the Santa Cruz river is located the town of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Originally settled in 1695 by sixty families from Zacastecas, Mexico and joined in 1696 by nineteen more families also from Zacasteca the town grew. For over 300 years Santa Cruz was on the main road between Santa Fe and Taos. In 1750 the census listed 197 families with 1,303 persons and by 1807, the population was estimated at 2,000.

The parish founded in 1695 is the second oldest parish in the region. Only Santa Fe is older. Santa Cruz during the settlement period was the center of all civil and church activities in the Rio Arriba (Upper) section of New Mexico and during the period of Mexican rule, Santa Cruz became known as the "wildest" town in the southwest.<sup>1</sup> Like all of the Spanish settlements, in 1680 the village was abandoned during the Pueblo Revolt and resettled in 1695. It was

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<sup>1</sup>Marc Treib, Sanctuaries of Spanish New Mexico (Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), p. 152; Coronado Cuarto Centennial Commission, New Mexico: A Guide to the Colorful State (New York: Hastings House, 1940) reprint ed., The WPA Guide to the 1930s New Mexico, with forward by Marc Simmons (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1989), p. 295.

from Santa Cruz that settlers fanned out to settle the rest of northern New Mexico. In 1797, as a population center, Santa Cruz along with three other parishes, El Paso, Santa Fe and Albuquerque, were secularized by Bishop Francisco Olivares of Durango. This move fulfilled a recommendation made by Bishop Tamaron in 1760, during his third episcopal visit, to try and gain greater control over this region at the edges of the Durango diocese. By secularizing the parishes, priests other than Franciscans could take over the duties of administration. While this action was taken, implementation was long in coming. By 1812 only two secular priests were in New Mexico ( El Paso and Santa Fe).

During the period of Mexican rule (1821-1846) the Catholic church in New Mexico was greatly neglected. In 1826 when Father San Vincente arrived from Durango to serve as Vicar General for the New Mexico territory and implement the transfer of more parishes to diocesan control he found a church in disarray. In 1832, Father Juan Felipe Ortiz, a native of New Mexico, arrived as the new Vicar General of New Mexico Territory and found his region in a state of decay.<sup>2</sup> Father Don Antonio Jose Martinez, the future combatant of Bishop Lamy, returned home to Taos from Durango in 1826 and brought with him a printing press and started a small school to train young men for the priesthood.<sup>3</sup>

It is during this period Santa Cruz and its environs became the cradle of

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<sup>2</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, p. 22; Kessell, Mission of New Mexico, p.14.

<sup>3</sup>Hanks, "Not of this Earth," p.32.

the Penitente movement and the center of *santero* activities. Construction of the church of Santa Cruz de la Cañada began in 1733 and finished in 1748.<sup>4</sup>

The first French clergy came to Santa Cruz in November 1869 with the assignment of Rev. Jean Baptiste Courbon by Bishop Lamy. He served the parish until January 1874. With a few brief exceptions, French clergy served as the parish priests for the parish of Santa Cruz de la Cañada until 1920 when the religious congregation from Spain, the "Sons of the Holy Family," took over the parish.<sup>5</sup>

The church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada is one of only two (Las Trampas is the other) churches still standing today inventoried by Fray Domínguez in 1776.<sup>6</sup> As one of the first settlements in New Mexico, it was visited by the Spanish representatives of the Catholic church in Durango; therefore, it is possible to trace the changes in the religious art of the church from its erection into the twentieth-century. Contemporary diaries and inventories, photographs, and the dating of statuary by art historians and restorers make it possible to

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<sup>4</sup>Lamy Memorial: Centenary of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, 1850 - 1950 (Santa Fe: Schifani Brothers Printing Co., Inc., 1950), pp. 78-79; Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia de Santa Cruz de la Cañada: 1733 - 1983 (Santa Cruz, NM: Santa Cruz Parish, 1983), pp. 5-12; Chavez, May Penitente Land, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup>Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia, pp. 103-106; Hanks, "Not of This Earth," pp.282-344.

<sup>6</sup>Kessell, Missions Since 1776, p.82.

identify, date and trace any artistic and architectural changes in this parish church.

In 1760, Bishop Tamarón, while visiting the parish church in Santa Cruz, commented on the large church with little adornment. In 1765, Father Andrés José García de la Concepción arrived as pastor to the parish of Santa Cruz. Born in La Puebla de los Angeles, Mexico, he was a member of the Franciscan order and arrived in New Mexico in 1747 to spent thirty-two years serving the parishes of the region.<sup>7</sup> While at Santa Cruz, Father Andrés García attempted to alleviate the problem of "little adornment." A painter, García fashioned a decorative altar rail, an altar screen and a variety of carved images. The most famous, still found in the church today, is *Santo Entierro*, a crucified Christ lying on pillows in a casket-like see-through sepulchre (Figure 4.1)<sup>8</sup>

By 1776, Father Francisco Antansio Domínguez in his report on the missions of New Mexico gave detailed descriptions of the adornments of the church. The altar screen, made of wood of the region, ". . . is exquisitely made. . . painted with white earth, consisting of two sections with niches squared and except for the chief one - all have little balustrades below. . . six varas high and

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<sup>7</sup>Adams, Eleanor B. ed. Bishop Tamarón's Visitation of New Mexico, 1760 (Albuquerque: Historical Society of New Mexico, 1954), p. 63; Boyd, Popular Arts of New Mexico, pp. 97-98; Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia, p. 104.

<sup>8</sup>Kessell, Missions Since 1776, pp. 81-82; Boyd, Popular Arts in New Mexico, pp. 96-99; Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia, p. 13. I saw the *Santo Entierro*, in the south side nave in the summer of 1992.





Figure 4.1 *Santo Entierro* by Fray Andrés García located in a niche on south side of nave of church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Photo by Alan C. Vedder. From Vedder Collection.

seven varas wide [width of the sanctuary]."<sup>9</sup> (a *vara* is approximately 2.8 feet)

The principal niche in the lower section of the altar screen held an image in the round of Our Lady of the Rosary. Her apparel, wrote Frather Domínguez, was "a dress of blue ribbed silk with fine silver lace, hooped earrings of seed pearls, pearl necklace, and silver rosary. Father García made the image, and perhaps for the shame of her being so badly made they left the varnish on her face very red."

On each side of the main niche were large oil paintings, one of the Immaculate Conception and the other of Our Lady of the Rosary. In the center niche of the upper section of the altar screen were two little paintings on buffalo skin, "so old the subject is not recognizable." On either side were large paintings also on buffalo skin, one of St. Louis, King of France, and the other of *Ecce Homo*.

Below the main niche was found a Tabernacle of painted, silvered wood lined with blue satin. Above the Tabernacle was a "lacquered crucifx with silver cornerplates, INRI and nails," and on either side a small *Jésus Nazareno*, St. Anthony, a lacquered Child Jesus and a little *Mater Delorosa*.<sup>10</sup>

In the Nave of the church Domínguez found an "atrocious" adobe table, a Holy Sepulcher, with hinges, in a poor casket, with some linens, a badly made

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<sup>9</sup>During the era of Domínguez, the altar screens were planned to display statues or canvases already belonging to the church. It was only in newer churches that had no images from New Spain that santeros painted figures on the altar screens. We will find this to be true as this church gets older and chapel screens are produced by later artists. Boyd, *Popular Arts*, p. 58.

<sup>10</sup>Domínguez, *Missions of New Mexico*, pp. 73-74.

confessional and pulpit that "is a horror". . . Artistic works included the altar screen, the image of Our Lady of Rosary, the large *Jesús Nazareno*, the Holy Sepulcher [*Cristo Entierro*] with the casket and the balustrade in the sanctuary were made and designed by Father Fray Andrés García.<sup>11</sup>(Figure 4.2)

Looking north at the head of the transept on the Epistle side (right) was the Carmel Chapel. On April 3, 1710 the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel formed. In the chapel there was no altar screen at the High altar. Domínguez notes that along the back of the chapel was a bench with a gilded and painted Tabernacle on it.

On the Tabernacle was a "mid-size image in the round of Our Lady of Carmel dressed in purple lustrine with a little wig, silver crown, scapulary and tiny Child Jesus." On the walls were four large oil paintings of holy subjects on buffalo skins and four others of medium size.<sup>12</sup>

On the Gospel side of the transept there was an altar dedicated to St. Francis and was used by the Third Order.<sup>13</sup> On this altar was a carved image of St. Francis and on either side of this carving was a "very large image in the round of *Jesús Nazareno* clothed in ribbed silk tunics, a white one underneath

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<sup>11</sup>Domínguez, Missions of New Mexico, p. 75.

<sup>12</sup>Domínguez, Missions of New Mexico, p. 77.

<sup>13</sup>Members of the Third Order of St. Francis lived as monks but did not necessarily take vows. The Confraternities were far more popular to join. They did not require the strictness of lifestyle of the Third Orders.

and purple over it, ordinary crown, cross and rope," and a large "*Dolorosa* clothed in half cloth with everthing very old. She had a silver radiance, a silver reliquary on her dress, two more of brass, one of lead, a shell cross and three ordinary medals." All of the images belonged to the church even though they were located on the Third Order's altar.<sup>14</sup> Generally, the order or Confraternity is responsible for decorating and or maintaining a chapel or altar dedicated to their patron or dedicated to their use. In this case, the church owned all of the images. There is no specific documentation to explain why the church owned the images rather than the Third Order. It is possible that in 1776 all of the men of the church may have been members of the Third Order of St. Francis and so the church purchased the images. The images may have been gifts from individuals to the church and used on the altar. If it was the choice of the parish to dedicate an altar to St. Francis, it would not be odd for the Order to use it while it was maintained by the church.

Priests in the Catholic church are often rotated between parishes, generally not spending more than one or two years at a location. In some cases, the rector of the church would stay a longer period of time and new priests would be assigned to a parish to learn how to administer a parish. From 1784 to 1789 Father José Carral was pastor of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. While there he added a Chapel for the Third Order of St. Francis. Adding a chapel specifically

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<sup>14</sup>Domínguez, Missions of New Mexico, p. 75.

dedicated to the Third Order of St. Francis would indicate support in the community for the order and lend support to the belief that the penitente brotherhoods which emerged in the early nineteenth century may have gotten their spiritual, if not organizational base from the Third order.<sup>15</sup> He had it built on the south end of the transept, where the old sacristy-baptistry stood, to counterbalance the chapel of Our Lady of Carmel which was already located on the north side.<sup>16</sup> Father Carral also added at least one bell made in the long-waisted Spanish style for the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel.<sup>17</sup>

The old account books also mention silk and paper flowers made for the altars. In 1787 in the sacristy "Twelve old rosettes of silk and forty-two multicolored roses" were ornaments for the Virgin on special feast days.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>William A. Beck, "The Penitentes," in New Mexico, Past and Present: A Historical Reader, ed. Richard N. Ellis (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971), p. 172; Weigle, Brothers of Light, p. 29.

<sup>16</sup>Kessell, Missions Since 1776, p. 82; Kubler, Religious Architecture, p. 103.

<sup>17</sup>Archives of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe (AASF), Accounts, Book XXXXVI, Box 1, Santa Cruz. 1782-95. This bell was sold on March 20, 1928 by the incumbent pastor with the consent of the Archbishop, to the Fred Harvey Company together with two other bells from Santa Cruz church and described as "the Cross, dated 1851. The plain one is Maria del Carmel. The other was Santo Criso. All three bells hung in the same tower at the old church at Santa Cruz, New Mexico." Although we have no dimensions or pictures of these it is probable that the Maria del Carmel bell was that sent by Father Carral, as the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel was flourishing in Santa Cruz. The 1851 bell was probably cast by Francisco Luján. Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 273.

<sup>18</sup>AASF, Accounts, Book XXXXVI, Box 1, Santa Cruz in Boyd, Popular Arts, p. 309.

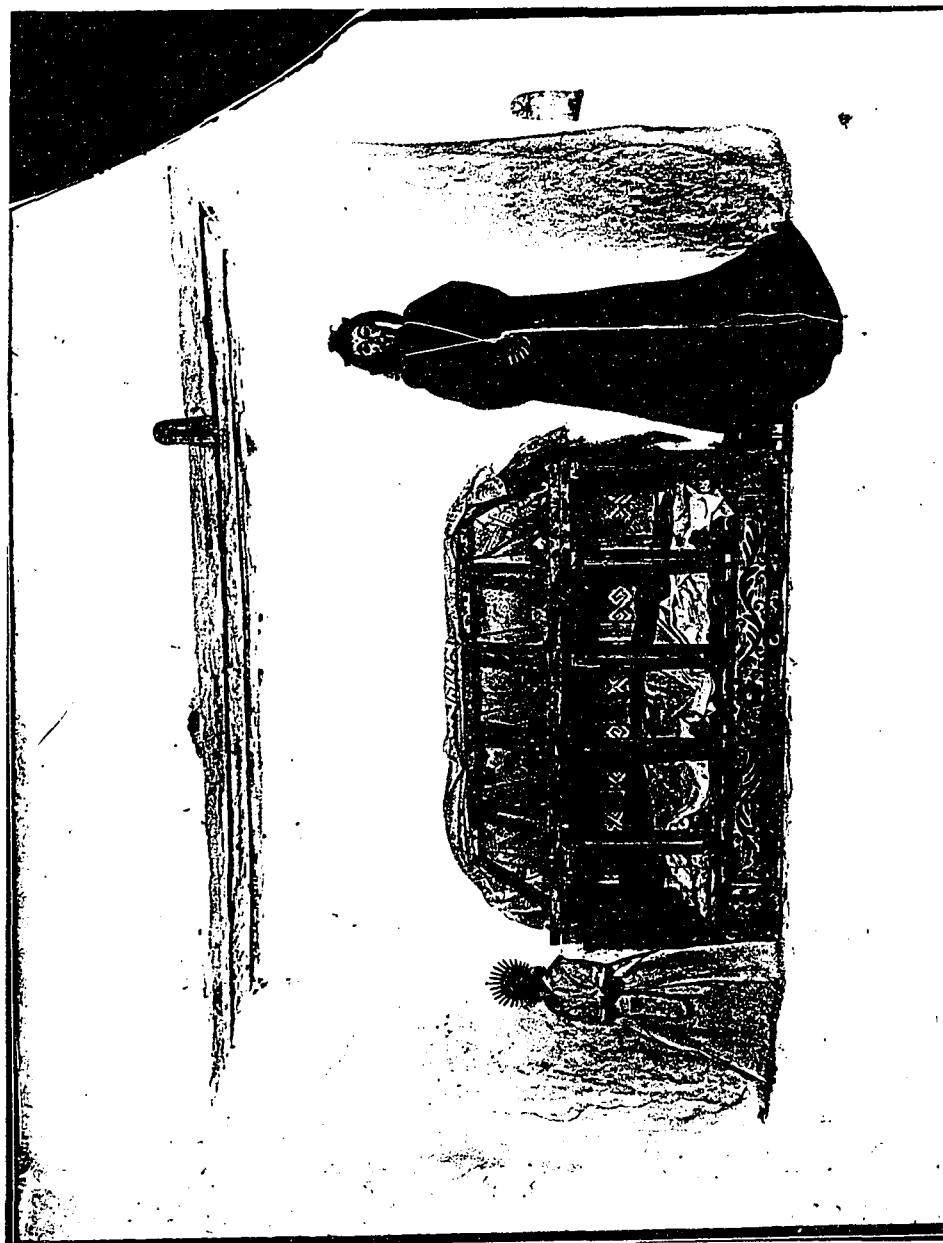


Figure 4.2 Casket and *bultos* in Santa Cruz de la Cañada church, 1911. Photo by Jesse Nesbaum.  
Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 13923.

The last visitation in the eighteenth-century with any information concerning the church at Santa Cruz came in 1796 with the April 11th notations of Father José Mariano Rosete. His records indicate that all of the art, including the retablos, images and altars are described in the same terms as earlier reports. Santa Cruz continued at the turn of the century to maintain the art originally placed in the church almost one hundred years earlier.<sup>19</sup>

Little had changed in Santa Cruz when in 1808 Father Benito Pereyro made his report, "the church is found materially reasonable and has, although very old but serviceable, the necessary ornaments. . . ." <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>Spanish Archives of New Mexico II, #1360, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives (NMSRCA) Santa Fe, New Mexico. "In the transept to each side there is a chapel of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel and in the other [side] one of the Venerable Third Order. The principal church had four wooded retablos painted, containing various images of Christ Our Lord, the Holy Virgin and other carved saints...The two said chapels each had its retablo of the same fabric [wood] with its carved images...Also, there is a wooden urn, new, painted, large, where there is kept the image of the dead Christ, and is very beautiful. There are also other carved images....There are three large carved images of Our Lady of Carmel, one of which is beautiful, in its altar and niche."

<sup>20</sup> "It [church] has three very decent altars. The main altar was built at the expense of Don Cristóbal Vigil; the one of the souls (animas) at the expense of Father Fary Ramón Antonio Gonzales and the one of Our Father San Francisco at the expense of Father Fray Josef Carral. There are two chapels, one for the Third Order. . . .The other chapel, is of Our Lady of Carmel. This holy statue was obtained at the expense of Father Fray Diego Muños Jurado, and the altar was painted to the devotion of Father Fray Ramón Antonio Gonzales in 1786. . . . There are two confraternities, one of the Blessed Sacrament and the other of Our Lady of Carmel, both maintained from dues paid annually by the members." Spanish Archives of New Mexico, I. #1191, NMSRCA, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Father Fray Ramón Antonio Gonzales served in Santa Cruz de la Cañada from April to June 1782, November 1783 to February 1784 and October 1789 to January 1793; Father Fray Josef Carral served in Santa Cruz from June 1784 to

The first negative remarks concerning the church's religious art were recorded in 1818 during the visitation of Don Juan Bautista Ladron del Niño de Guevara, representing the diocese of Durango, Mexico on a tour of the vast territory under Durango's control. The Mexican church of the early nineteenth century was already far advanced in its artistic sensibilities from New Mexico. The art in Mexico had taken on the very ornate rococo design and gold leaf was applied everywhere. The primitive art found in New Mexico offended the sensibilities of the Mexican priest. He did not specifically describe the paintings hanging on the walls, but he did note that they were paintings on buffalo hides and as such ought to be removed. He found them "very indecent" and also condemned the crown of hide worn by the life-size Jesus of Nazareth and ordered a smaller image of Jesus of Nazareth to be burned. He noted specifically the Christ in the "wooden urn" that was missing two fingers.<sup>21</sup> Presumably the hide paintings Guevara referred to were the paintings Father Domínguez mentioned in 1776, including the subjects of St. Louis, King of France and *Ecce Homo*. While de Guevara attacks the method of creating the art, the "buffalo hides," a "crown of hide" and the "carved wood" of a statue, he does not condemn the subject matter. Broken figures on a statue of Jesus are seen as "indecent." It is the quality of the pieces NOT the subject matter in dispute here.

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October 1789 and Father Fray Diego Muños Jurado served from August 1780 to August 1781. Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia, pp. 104-105.

<sup>21</sup>AASF, Reel #45, Frames #99-127, NMSRCA, Santa Fe, New Mexico.



While the priests visiting from Mexico complained about the rendering of the art work and the poor quality of the tools and medium used, there were no negative comments about the subject matter of the works indicating no particular difficulty with the subjects of the art, just the execution. After American conquest, however, both the subject matter and the style became an issue of contention.

The 1821 inventory of Father Manuel Rada, dated April 2, did not note any changes in the ornaments of the Santa Cruz church.<sup>22</sup> It was customary for the pastor/rector leaving a parish to write a complete inventory of all that belonged to the church. This inventory often documented purchases, gifts, repairs, restorations and the contents of the church. The lack of change would indicate the parishioners of Santa Cruz de la Cañada did not allow the art to be removed as Guevara had requested and that the images in the church all date to the eighteenth-century. In the 1830s José Rafael Aragón, a noted santero of this region, began work at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. During his most productive period and until his death, Rafael Aragón produced a vast quantity for Father Don Juan de Jesús Trujillo, the last Hispanic priest, who was in charge of the church at Santa Cruz from 1838 until 1869, when Lamy replaced Trujillo with the first French priest assigned to the parish. On the main altar, Aragón painted two large, half-length angels at the lower side of Garcia's *retable* and added

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<sup>22</sup>AASF Reel #54, Frames #301-316, NMSRCA, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

painted shells to the two upper side panels as well as a crest containing the Holy Ghost (as a dove) at the top. (Figure 4.3)

Aragón also painted the large altar screen which was placed on the north side of the nave (To the right as a visitor walked into the church.) (Figure 4.4). The figure at the top of the screen is Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patron of Mexico, central and South America. The town of Guadalupe is in Entremadura, a Spanish province southwest of Madrid. In the fourteenth-century the Virgin Mary appeared to a shepherd on a hillside and led him to where a statue of herself had been hidden. Early on December 9, 1531 on a hill called Tepeyec, (just north of today's Mexico City), Juan Diego, a Christian Indian on his way to Mass, heard the singing of a voice. The young woman identified herself as the Virgin Mary and directed Diego to go to the Bishop and instruct him to build a shrine to her on the hill. Three visits, the miraculous growing of roses on the hill and her portrait on Diego's apron finally convinced the Bishop to build the Shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe. The original painting on Diego's cape and located at the altar of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico, shows a young woman within a radiating mandorla<sup>23</sup> her hands together in prayer standing upon a dark upturned moon supported by an angel. Artistically, Diego's

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<sup>23</sup>A mandorla (Italian for almond) is an oval used to enclose a figure in glory. Most often seen enclosing Christ and the Virgin a mandorla is never used to enclose a living person, but is reserved for souls in glory.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is very similar to the European version of the Immaculate Conception in its placement of the Virgin on a moon.

It was under the banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe that the Mexican people gathered in their fight for independence in 1821. During the independence movement and subsequent revolution in Mexico, the nation divided between those who supported the Spanish monarchy and those who desired independence. The institution of the Catholic church was also divided, with the hierarchy in Mexico City siding with the Pope who supported the Spanish King and many of the parish priests siding with the people fighting for independence. The banner of the Virgin chosen by the independence movement to fight under and to ask for support from was that of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our Lady of Guadalupe was seen as the Virgin for the Mexican people, having revealed herself to an Indian in the New World and possessing the dark skin of the Mexican people.

Below the centrally located Our Lady of Guadalupe, the *retablo* is divided into two rows, each having three sections. Inside of each section was painted an important image to the people of New Mexico. Rafael's style is identifiable on this *retablo* by the border designs of simple drapery around each of the six sections and the placement of plants or trees on each side of the figures in each section giving the figure a place in space.

The first figure identified is located in the upper left hand corner of *retablo* on the first row. It is Saint Rita de Cascia, the patron saint of those who

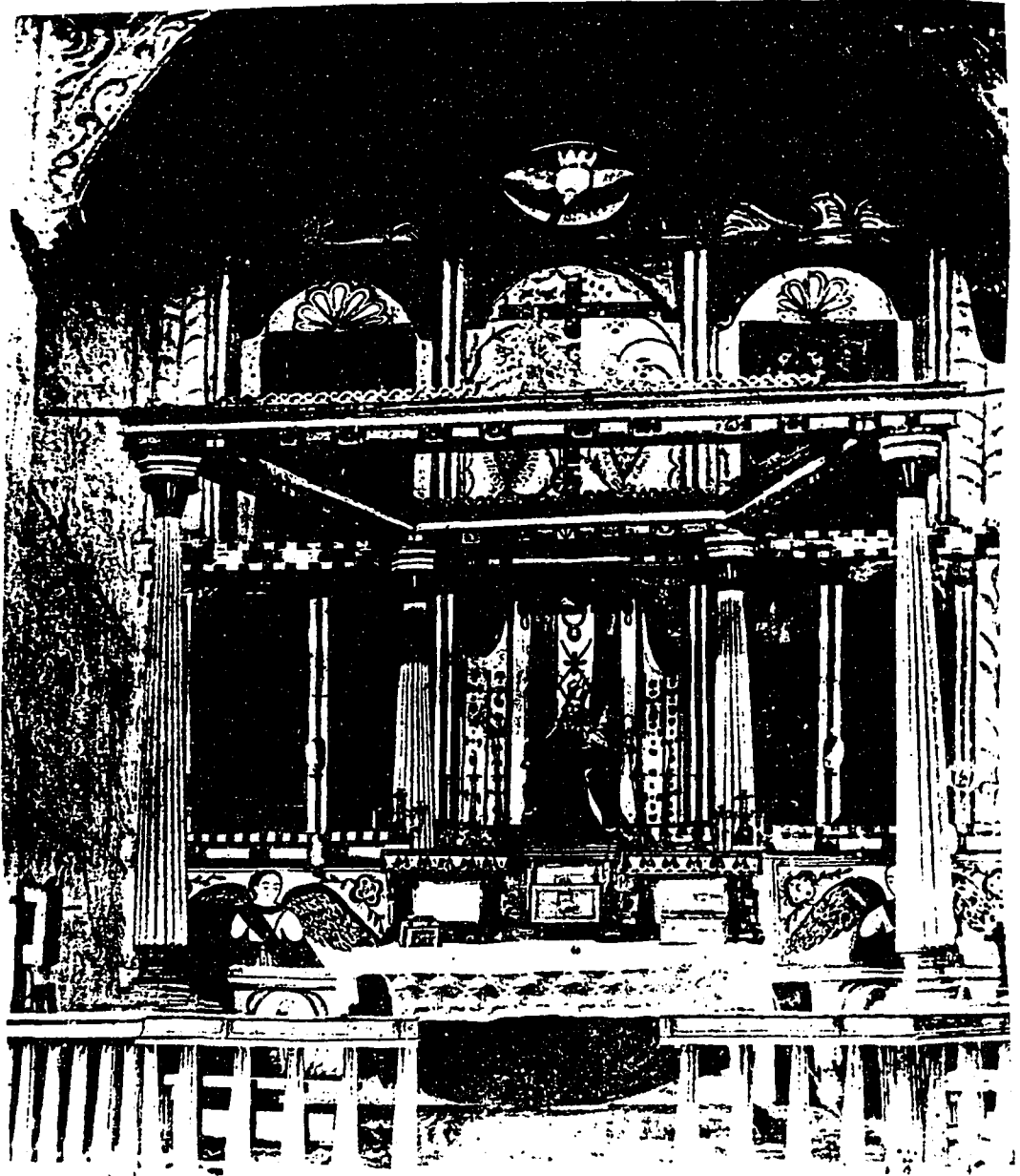


Figure 4.3 Altar in church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Aragón's additions can be seen behind the temporary canopy columns erected for a celebration at the altar. Photo by H.T. Heister, 1872. In *La Inglesia*, p. 18.

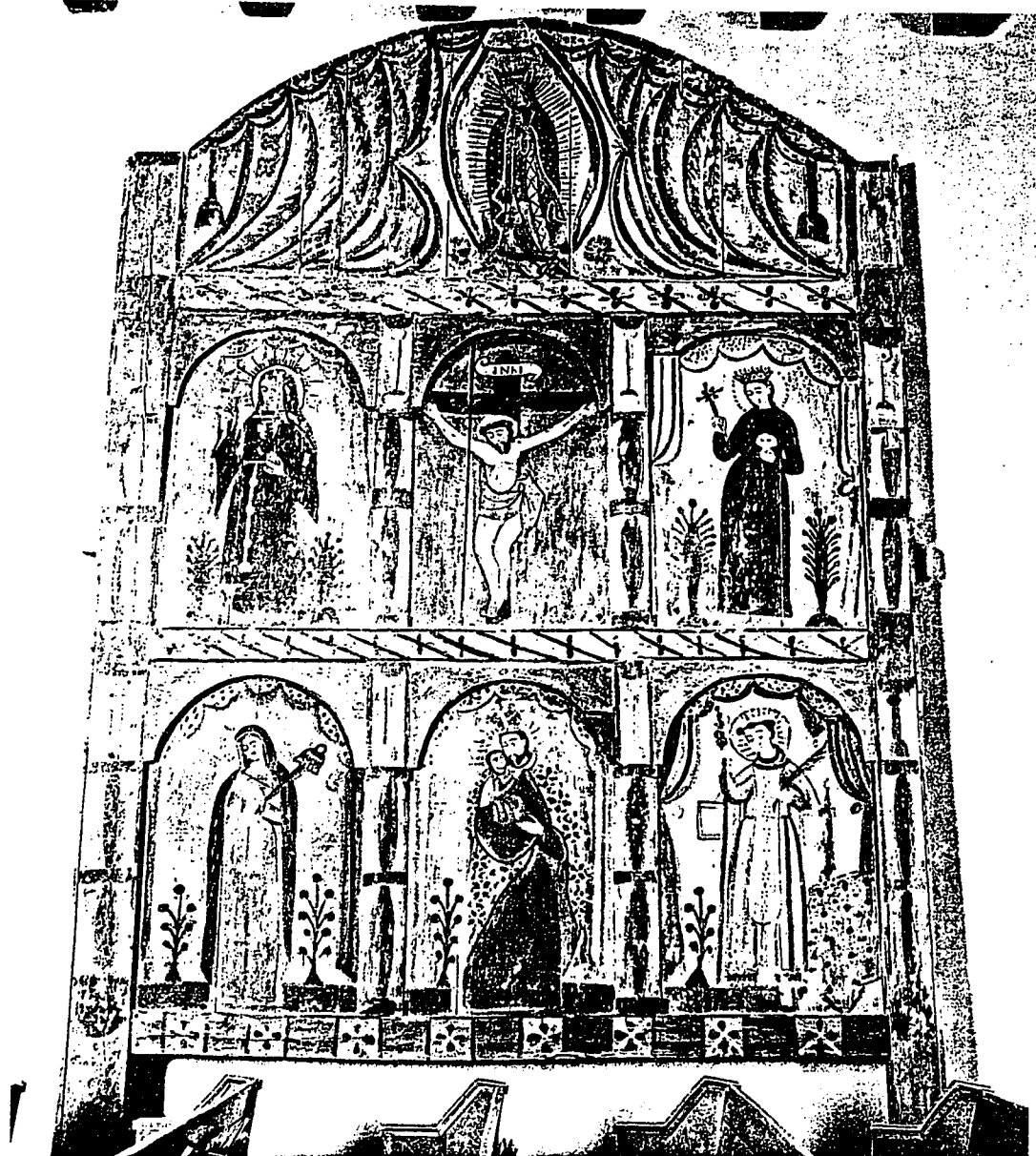


Figure 4.4 Altar Screen by Rafael Aragón for Santa Cruz. At the top is Our Lady of Guadalupe. From top to bottom, left to right are: St. Rita de Cascia, a Crucifix, St. Rosalia de Palermo, Nueastra Señora de los Dolores (Our Lady of Sorrows), St. Joseph with the Christ Child and a male saint, thought to be St. Lorenzo (Laurence). Photo by Tom Velarde, 1983 in *La Inglesia*, p. 93.

find themselves in desperate situations. Depicted wearing an Augustinian nun's habit, an order she joined late in life, she is prayed to by those who desired children and feared infertility. Like Saint Jude, Rita was seen as one who could perform miracles when the situations of life seemed hopeless. Saint Rita de Cascia was painted on *retablos* and carved as *bultos* by a number of New Mexican *santeros*.<sup>24</sup>

Few *retablos* in New Mexico did not include Christ in some form. In this one, he is represented on the cross. The Passion once again takes a place of dominance on this *retablo* for the parish church of Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Located in the center on the first row was a crucifix painted by Aragón. The ultimate expression of the Passion and Jesus's sacrifice, the crucifix reminds the viewer of the responsibility he/she has to live a righteous life.

The last figure painted on the first row and located in the upper right hand corner is St. Rosalia de Palermo, a Sicilan hermit, usually depicted wearing a robe or pilgrim dress. She is portrayed with a crown of roses and holds a crucifix in her right hand and a skull in her left. Both the crucifix and the skull are symbols of meditation.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes she is portrayed holding a Rosary.

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<sup>24</sup> Rafael Aragón's *bultos* of St. Rita can be found in several private collections as well as on the *retablo* in Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 94, 134, 218, 220-222; Butler, Lives of the Saints, pp. 387-388.

<sup>25</sup>Symbols of meditation were often included in paintings to serve as the stimulus for the viewer to pray and meditate upon the death and sacrifice of Christ and eventual death of the prayer. Meditation on death reminded the viewer

Rendered by a number of *santeros*, including Rafael Aragón, Pedro Fresquí and the School of Leguna *santero*, St. Rosalia de Palmero was seen in the Catholic church as a protector against epidemics and earthquakes; in New Mexico she protected the people from smallpox and typhoid.<sup>26</sup>

The second and bottom row of figures on Aragón's *retablo* include the images of the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Joseph with the Christ child and St. Lorenzo. At the bottom left is Nuestra Señora de los Dolores (Our Lady of Sorrows). Austerely dressed, Our Lady of Sorrows is the grieving Mother at the foot of the Cross. In this case, one sword is plunged into her breast, symbolizing the seven sorrows she would experience as prophesied by Simeon. Saint Joseph and the Christ child, found in the center bottom of the *retablo* are often portrayed in New Mexican religious art. St. Joseph, the earthly husband of the Virgin Mary, is the patron of fathers, families, workers in general and specifically carpenters. At the bottom right corner, the final panel on this *retablo* is of a male saint, believed by scholars to be Saint Lorenzo (Lawrence) (died 258). He is identified by the dalmatic of a deacon he is wearing and he was martyred by roasting on a gridiron for refusing to give to the Prefect of Rome the riches of the church which had been planned for the poor. The object at his

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of his/her own mortality and therefore the importance of living a righteous life before their own death.

<sup>26</sup>Frank, *New Kingdom of the Saints*, pp. 17, 44, 56, 81, 306; Apostols-Cappadona, Diane *Dictionary of Christian Art* (New York: Continuum, 1995), p.294.

feet in this piece is believed to be a gridiron. Lorenzo is invoked as a shield against fire, an advocate for the poor and as a protector of crops which are ready for harvest.<sup>27</sup>

In all cultures which worship saints, the images rendered tend to be chosen according to their value in the everyday life of the community, their alliance with a particular family, dedication to a religious community, or a perceived need of the population. The *santeros* of New Mexico rendered in both *bultos* and *retablos* the sensibilities of the population. The constant concern over the threat of fires, which due to isolation could burn out of control; the lack of doctors and medicine which meant outbreaks of epidemics and the high mortality rates among women and new borns; and the ever present focus on the Passion of Christ were all represented in the Aragón altar screen in the church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada and reflected the concerns of the community (Figure 4.6).

While Rafael Aragón made many *bultos*, some of which are still in the possession of the church, the other major work contributed by Aragón to the church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada was the altar screen in the South Chapel (formerly known as the Third Order Chapel) (Figure 4.5).<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints, p. 304; Ducet-Suchaux, G; Pastoureau, M. The Bible and the Saints (New York: Flammarion, 1994), p. 213.

<sup>28</sup>In all of the inventory reports made by New Mexican priests through 1821 the south chapel is called the Third Order Chapel of St. Francisco. Father Juan de Jesús Trujillo, the last New Mexican priest before the assignment of French clergy calls the south chapel the Chapel of San Francisco. After that the chapel is called the South Chapel. The other, north chapel continues to keep the name of



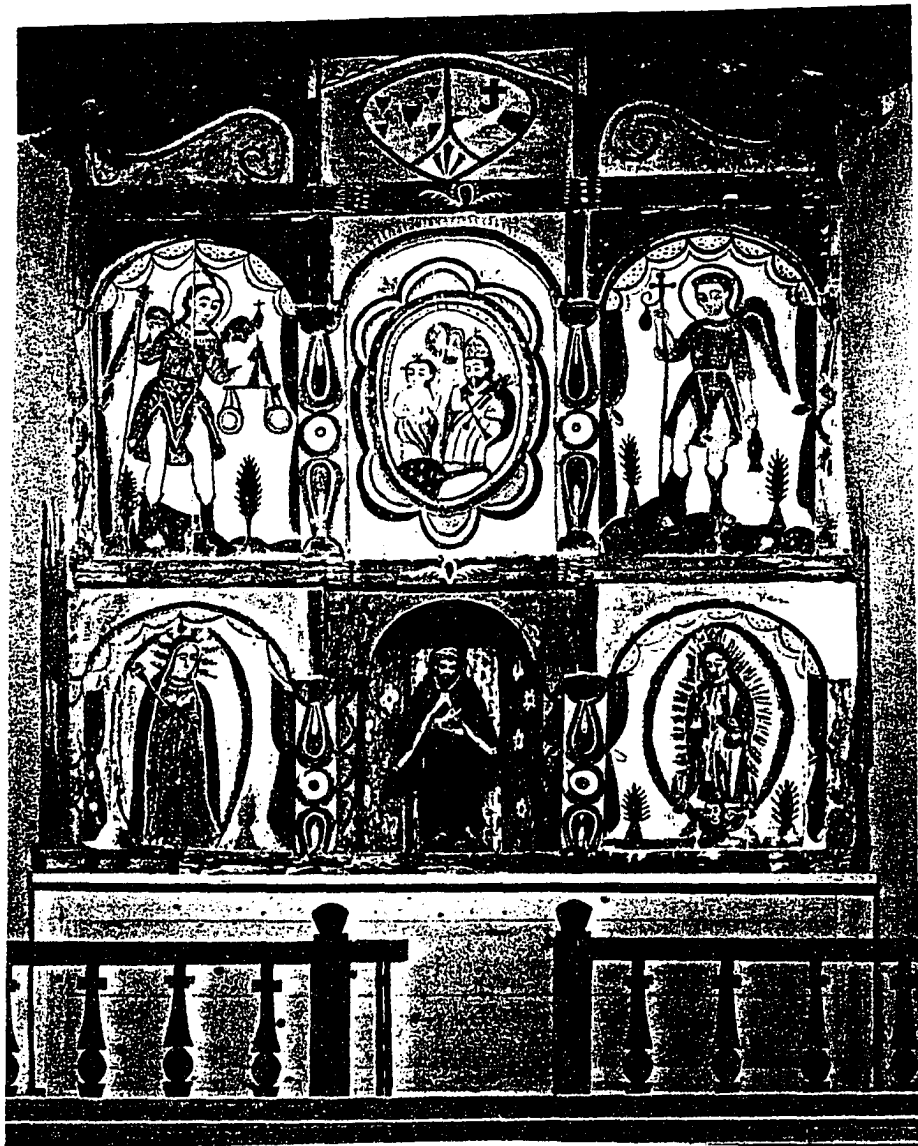


Figure 4.5 South Chapel (formerly known as the Third Order Chapel), 1983 (after restoration) Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 91.

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Our Lady of Carmel. The Third Order of Saint Francis of Assisi had long been dissolved and replaced by the penitential brotherhoods by the time of French takeover.

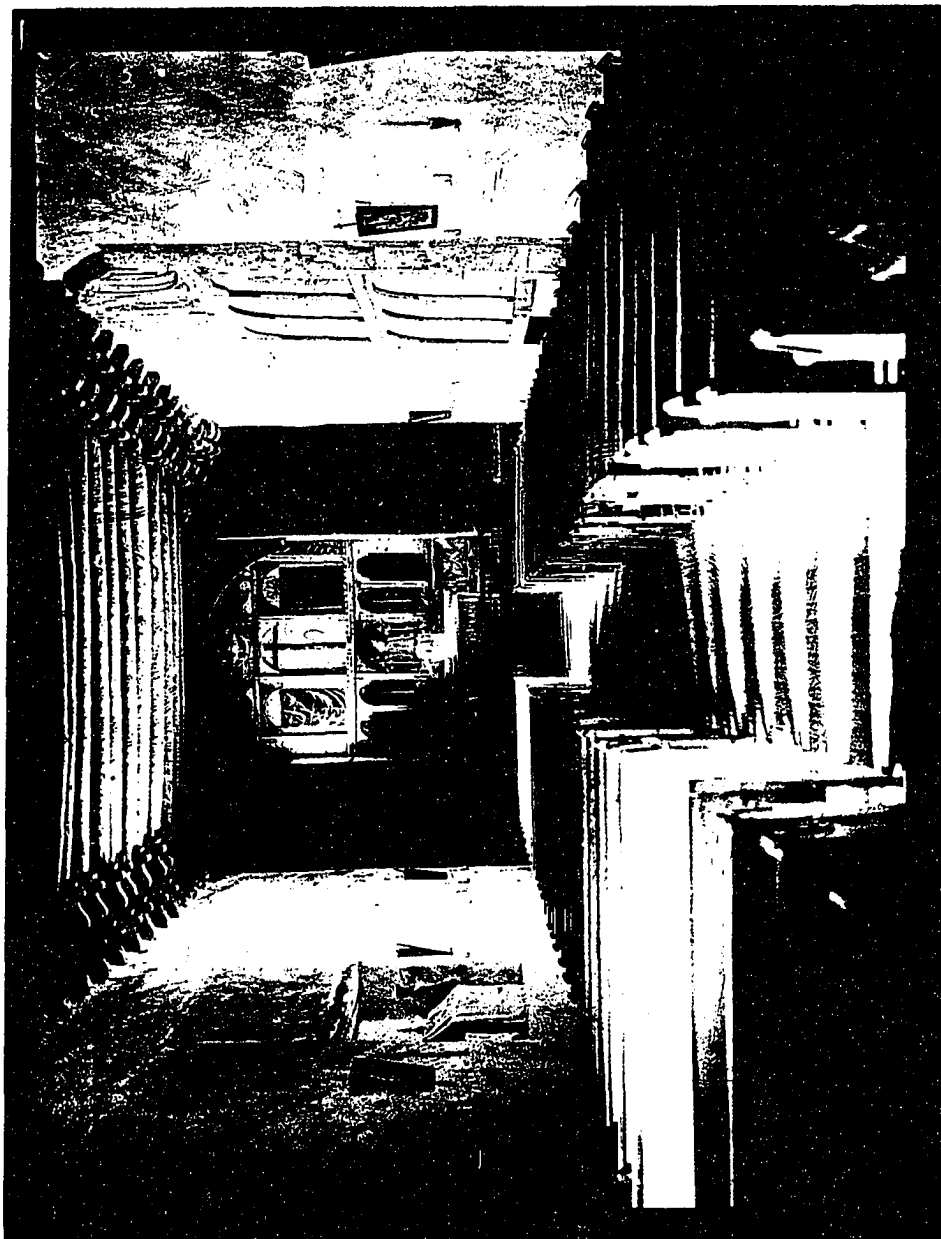


Figure 4.6 Interior of Santa Cruz ca. 1915. Photo by T. Harmon Oarkhurst. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 9808.

The South Chapel, built and dedicated during the pastorate of Father José Carral (1784-1789) to St. Francis of Assisi, architecturally balanced the church, providing a counter to the North chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Carmel (Figure 4.7).

Saint Francis was a legend during his lifetime. Having turned away from greath wealth as a young man to "wed Lady Poverty" he founded the Friars Minor. Over time the community grew strong and wealthy. In 1224, Francis abandoned the order he had formed and lived alone on Mount La Verna in Italy. On the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, Christ Crucified appeared to him in the form of a seraph. His wounds emanating rays of light which impressed corresponding stigmata into the saint's flesh. After this incident, Francis was venerated as a holy man. He died two years later in 1226.

After his death, his life was remodelled on that of Christ. He's credited with many miracles. Iconographically, St. Francis is always seen in the homespun habit of a Franciscan, tied around his waist with the three-knotted cord (evoking the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience). He is identified by the stigmata on his hands and feet, as well as the chest wound which is often visible through his habit. He is often seen contemplating a skull or a crucifix in his hand. He is an example of humility, simplicity and spiritual intensity.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Apostolos-Cappadona, Dictionary of Christian Art, p. 136; Duchet-Suchaux, The Bible and the Saint, pp.146-147; Murray, Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture, pp. 185-186.

The Franciscan missionaries brought to New Mexico the teaching of Jesus and St. Francis as reflected in both the Third Order of St. Francis and the Confraternities dedicated to the *Via Crucis*, Jesus Nazarene and the blood of Christ. Since the Franciscans were the spiritual mentors of the New Mexicans from 1598 until the early 1800s, it is not surprising that they followed Franciscan practices like flagellation, Lenten processions of the *Via Crucis*, and a dedication to St. Francis as a patron saint.

When commissioned to execute the altar screen for the new chapel, Rafael Aragón would naturally incorporate those images invoked by the beliefs of the missionaries, the larger community and the artist himself.

At the very top of this screen, the five wounds of Christ are portrayed as inverted pyramids as well as the emblem of St. Francis of Assisi. The crossed arms of Christ and St. Francis, each with a wound in hand, Christ from the Crucifixion and St. Francis from the Stigmata dominate the shield. The Third order of St Francis and a community devoted to St. Francis would have this symbol at the top of a *retablo* in their chapel. True to the regional style, the *retablo* is made up of two rows with panels dividing each. Each contains a painting or *bulto*. On the first row in the upper left hand and upper right hand respectively are two of the Archangels, St. Michael and St. Rafael.

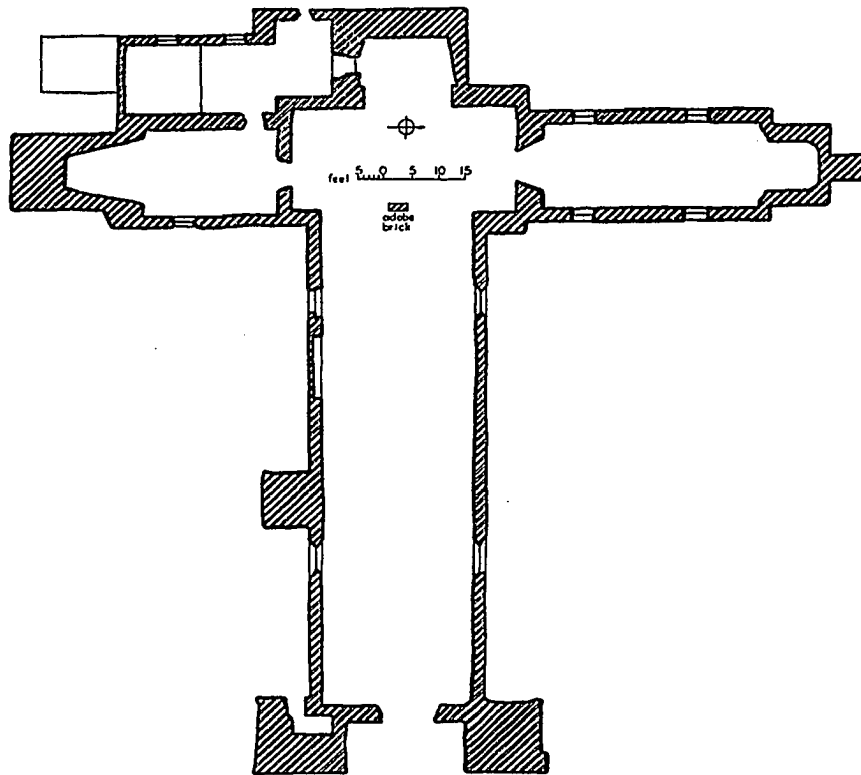


Figure 4.7 Santa Cruz church, simplified plan. From Kubler, the Religious Architecture of New Mexico, p.31.

Saint Michael the archangel is winged and fills two distinct roles in the iconography of the Catholic church. As the captain of the heavenly armies, he is often portrayed with a sword and armour conquering the powers of Hell. As the Lord of Souls, seen in this work, he holds the scales of judgement and is assigned by God the duty of receiving the souls of the dead. It is his job to weigh them in a balance. Those whose good works are plentiful will be presented to God. Those who do not live up to the standard are placed in Purgatory to be purified or sent to Hell. St. Michael is appealed to by the dying to preserve them from the powers of the devil.<sup>30</sup>

The other archangel portrayed is that of Rafael. From the Hebrew "God heals," Rafael is the angel of the Old Testament sent to watch over and protect Tobias throughout his travels and assists in the cure of his father's blindness. (Tobias 6). In the New Testament, it is Rafael who announces the Nativity of Jesus to the shepherds (Luke 2:10-11). He is the archetypal guardian angel. In representations and iconography, Rafael is winged and in one hand he holds a pilgrim's staff which is topped by a gourd. In the other hand he holds a fish or a vase holding fish gall with which he cured Tobias the Elder's blindness. In Rafael Aragón's work, Rafael holds the fish and staff. His curative powers were

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<sup>30</sup>Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 23, 49, 204, 212, 218, 232, 305; Apostolos-Cappadona, Dictionary of Christian Art, p. 240; Duchet-Suchaux, Pastoureau, The Bible and the Saints, pp. 243-244; Murray, Peter; Murray, Linda The Oxford Companion to Christian Art and Architecture (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 18-19.

well known and he was called *Médico de Dios* (Physician of God) and was implored by the petitioner for the restoration on health.<sup>31</sup>

Centered between the two archangels on the upper row is found a representation of the Holy Trinity. There are many different interpretations of the Holy Trinity. The theological concept of three in one was hard to transfer into the visual arts. In remote places like New Mexico, there was a tendency to portray the Trinity as three in one with three identical heads of men coming from the same body or as three identical men only distinguished by pictures on their chests of the sun, a lamb and a dove. In this example, Rafael Aragón used a more accepted form of depicting the Trinity with two men and a dove. The male figures are dressed in long tunics with God being portrayed with a triple crown, sun sphere and scepter and Christ as a man with his left hand raised in blessing and holding the lamb. The Holy Spirit is represented as a dove. (Figure 4.8)<sup>32</sup>

As seen on the *retablo* in the church itself, Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Guadalupe are once more portrayed. This time they are placed on the second and bottom row of the screen -- Our Lady of Sorrows, on the left, the

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<sup>31</sup>Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 37, 38, 43, 51, 114, 121, 305; Duchet-Suchaux, Pastoureau, The Bible and the Saints, pp. 291-292; Apostolos-Cappadona, Dictionary of Christian Art, p.288.

<sup>32</sup>For detailed discussions of the Trinity in art see, Duchet-Suchaux, The Bible and the Saints, pp. 333-334; Apostolos-Cappadona, Dictionary of Christian Art, p. 327; Ferguson, Signs and Symbols in Christian Art, pp. 16, 27, 29, 47, 94, 153-54, 10-162, 178; Frank, New Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 28, 157, 200, 301-302.

mother having lost her Son and Our Lady of Guadalupe, on the right, the patron of Mexico. This *retablo* included a niche for a *bulto* of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of this chapel and the Third Order who had Mass said here. (Figure 4.9). This *bulto* is located on the bottom center of the screen.

Rafael Aragón, the santero of the major pieces in this church, was the most prolific santero during the "golden age" of New Mexican santero art (1790 - 1863). Active from 1820 until his death in 1862, Aragón constructed and painted twelve altar pieces in the territory and he produced all of the altarpieces produced in New Mexico from the 1830s on.

Born in New Mexico of New Mexican parents in 1795, he lived in Santa Fe as a young man and in 1815 married María Josefa Lucern of Santa Fe. He was also associated with two confraternities: Our Lady of Rosary and The Blessed Sacrament. His first important work, completed in 1825, was the altar piece in the Church of San Lorenzo at Picurís Pueblo, forty miles from Santa Fe. From that time on, his reputation grew. In 1832, with the death of his wife, Aragón moved his family to the village of Pueblo Quemado (Córdova) at the edge of the Santa Cruz valley. From his new location, he gained many commissions, including the Our Lady of Talpa Chapel in 1838, works for Chimayó, the Chapel of Our Lady of Mount Carmel near Taos, Church at El Valle, the Chapel San José de Chama at Hernández and the works at Santa Cruz





Figure 4.8 Holy Trinity, detail from altar screen in South Chapel. Photo by Tom Velarde, 1983. In *La Inglesia*, p. 92.

de la Cañada. At the time of his death, the church at Santa Cruz paid for his burial expenses out of a commission due him for *bultos* rendered.<sup>33</sup>

The 1869 final inventory of the last New Mexican priest, Father Juan de Jesús Trujillo, who served the parish of Santa Cruz de la Cañada before the French take-over noted a few changes which included the "one [tower of rock and earth] on the south . . . a marble angel . . . two baptismal fonts. . . one sculpted statue of Our Lady of Carmel by Rafael Aragón. . . all constructed during my tenure," and a number of items painted.<sup>34</sup>

By 1881, few internal changes had occurred to the church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. A photograph taken by William H. Jackson (Figure 4.10) of the church interior in 1881 still shows the García altar screen with the old Mexican oil paintings (Appendix I), the wooden cross in the center, Rafael Aragón's screen to the right of the nave. On the left edge of the photo is the niche with *Cristo Entierro* in his sepulchre. Lieutenant Bourke wrote on July 16, 1881, while attending the Feast of Our Lady of Carmel vespers in the church at Santa Cruz, "Within there is a choir in a very rickety condition, and a long, narrow nave with a flat roof of peeling pine 'vigas' covered with river plants and dirt; on one side, there is a niche containing life-size statues of our savior, Blessed Virgin, and one or two saints; all of them, as might be expected, barbarous in

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<sup>33</sup>Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 200-202.

<sup>34</sup>AASF Reel #57, Frames #450-456, NMSRCA, Santa Fe.

execution. Facing this niche, is a large wall painting, divided into panels, each devoted to some conventional Roman Catholic picture, which, in spite of the ignorance of the artist [Rafael Aragón] could be recognized. Tallow candles in tin sconces, affixed to the white washed walls lit up the nave and transept with a flicker that in the language of poetry might be styled a 'dim religious light,' but in the plain matter of fact language of every day life would be called dim only." Bourke also noted that the priest, Father Francolon, when he saw him [Bourke], had a chair brought for him to sit in near the altar. Bourke also noted the "discordant" guitars, violin and choir, the volley fired outside of the door and the "unaffected devotion" of the people during the service. Bourke's noting in his 1881 diary a niche containing life-size statues of the savior, Virgin Mary and one or two saints, "all of them ...barbarous, " is not confirmed in the Jackson photograph of the same year (Figure 4.10).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Contemporary inventories do not mention life-size statues, with the exception of *Cristo Entierro*. No other niches exist in the church except the one on the south wall of the nave where the *Cristo* is kept. Figure 4.2 shows the niche, as taken in 1911. Given his description of the pieces as "barbarous in execution," it is doubtful he was referring to any possible pieces of Saint Sulpice art which might have been imported from the east and were found in the church after 1940. A 1983 inventory mentions a sixty-six inch *El Cristo* and a forty-nine inch *la Virgen*. They were found in the basement of the church. It is possible that these are the *bultos* mentioned by Dominguez and located on the Third Orders' Altar in 1776, moved by the Brotherhood when they built their own *moradas* in the nineteenth-century and brought out for the vespers service seen by Bourke. John G. Bourke, "Bourke on the Southwest, X," ed. Lansing B. Bloom, New Mexico Historical Review 11 (1936): 247-55.



Figure 4.9 Detail of *bulto* of St. Francis in the altar of the South Chapel, 1982.  
Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 90.

L. Bradford Prince, in his 1915 work Spanish Mission Churches of New Mexico, described what he saw on his trip to the church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Prince noted the two chapels, the north for Our Lady of Carmel and the South for St. Francis; the six Mexican oil paintings (Appendix: I); he described the side altar screen of Rafael Aragón (Figure 4.6); the Christ in the Tomb; the statuette of St. Francis (which he dated as seventeenth-century Spanish, Figure 4.10) and a statue of Our Lady of Carmel in a silk robe. He also described the painting of the main altar. In the Chapel of Our Lady of Carmel he notes a picture of Our Lady of Carmel. The picture is a *retablo* of Our Lady of Carmel which was executed by Rafael Aragón (Figure 4.11). <sup>36</sup>

Prince found in the sacristy "a great many ornaments of Mexican manufacture, which with the growth of a more refined taste, or from their becoming broken, have been discarded from time to time. Among them are two angels of the last Judgement, with long trumpets, (Appendix I.2) said to have been made at Chimayó, and a number of paintings on wood, including a Holy Family, San Francisco, Señora de Guadalupe, etc." <sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> L. Bradford Prince, Spanish Mission Churches of New Mexico (Cedar Rapids, IA: the Torch Press, 1915), pp. 310-315.

<sup>37</sup> L. Bradford Prince, Spanish Mission Churches of New Mexico (Cedar Rapids, IA: The Torch Press, 1915), pp. 310-315. I have not found many photographs of the interior of the church in the 20s and 30s, although more may exist. Interiors of the church in photographs from around 1940 and in the late 50s show additions of a plaster of paris Piéta, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and St. Anthony of Padua as available from religious ornaments producers in the eastern United States (illustrated in Figures 3.13, 3.14, 3.15).

By the time the Spanish priests (Sons of the Holy Family) came into the parish in 1920, there was little evidence of ornamental change in the church of Santa Cruz de la Cañada, in spite of the fact that the majority of the clergy had been French in culture and artistic taste for half a century.<sup>38</sup>

According to E. Boyd, the entire altar screen by García and the additions by Aragón, except for the two angels at the bottom of the screen and the eighteenth-century style painting on the wooden arch above the sanctuary rail, were all overpainted in 1947 with enamels in the outmoded, stenciled motifs of Viollet le Duc (Figure 4.12). Boyd's work in restoration, as well as photographs and diary entries support the belief that religious artistic change did not occur in this parish church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada until the 1940s. This move to modernize was reversed in the 1980s when complete restoration was done of the altar screen to the original style of García and Aragón. (Figure 4.13).<sup>39</sup>

The one place where French clerical influence can be seen was not in the religious art but in the architecture. The changes highlight how little the priests understood the properties of adobe bricks and structures with their attempts to add ornamentation unable to withstand the climate to the church's exterior.

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<sup>38</sup>Of the clergy assigned to Santa Cruz de la Cañada parish by Lamy and subsequent French Archbishops there were thirteen French, two New Mexican and one Belgian. Santa Cruz Parish, *La Inglesia*, pp.105-106, Hanks, "Not of this Earth," pp. 304-344.

<sup>39</sup>Frank, *Kingdom of the Saints*, p. 201; Boyd, *Popular Arts*, p. 401.



Figure 4.10 Interior of Santa Cruz ca. 1881. Photo by William H. Jackson.  
Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 9785.

Adobe work added by Rev. Jean Baptiste Courbon while he was at Santa Cruz (1869-1874) included a row of pointed, open tent-like merlons atop both sides of the chapels and thin ornamental arches are seen on either side of the pediments. The horizontal stacks of rounded adobes laid side by side to form a parapet on were added after the 1880s. (Figures 4.14, 4.15).<sup>40</sup>

An architecture of sun-dried mud bricks is common to most semi-arid countries and in the southwestern states the bricks were called adobes. The material is a clay that accumulates on the surface of the ground and can be collected with little effort. In the Rio Grande drainage of New Mexico, adobe is by far the most common building material, for civil and religious architecture.

The method of manufacture is nearly always the same. The clay is kneaded with the bare feet or with a hoe into an even paste. Straw or manure is added as a binder and to prevent cracking as it dries. The mud is formed into a brick in a wooden mold. It is allowed to dry for several days and then stacked in piles for the final drying. In a wall, the bricks are usually laid with mud mortar with the consistency of the original paste for the bricks. The average brick weighed fifty to sixty pounds and measured 10 X 18 X 5 inches.

In New Mexico the adobe was a very practical building material. It was stable and well insulated. Under ideal circumstances, adobe could withstand structural strains and weather erosion. A fair quality of clay would wear at a

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<sup>40</sup>Kessell, Missions Since 1776, p. 84.



rate of one inch in twenty years. However, the quality of the mud and production varied greatly across the land. After the rainy season, the adobe buildings were cracked and needed repair. Usually the women of the community repaired the walls by applying a coat of whitewash made from gypsum rock and micaceous clay found throughout the region. To build strong walls and maintain their integrity, the base of the wall was wider than the crest. Some churches bases were thirty inches or more.<sup>41</sup>

When the French clergy came in with their desire for merlons, ornamental arches, and other architectural designs, they could not be made of adobe as made by the New Mexicans. The designs were too vulnerable to the weather extremes. It was the thickness and size of the adobe bricks that made them successful in the New Mexican weather.

In 1880 new doors produced locally by Guadalupe Garduño of Nambé were added to the church, in 1897 the roof was covered with a pitched roof of wood shingles (Figure 4.16), and in the 1930s it received a multileveled peaked tin roof. (Figure 4.17)<sup>42</sup>

The change in the interior ornaments, including plaster of paris statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, St. Anthony of Padua, a crucifix, and kneeling angels

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<sup>41</sup>Kubler, The Religious Architecture of New Mexico, pp.24-29.

<sup>42</sup>Santa Cruz Parish, La Inglesia, pp. 24, 31; Kessell, Missions Since 1776, pp. 86-87.



Figure 4.11 Our Lady of Carmel mentioned in 1983 inventory of church. Retablo of Our Lady of Carmel by Rafael Aragón, 1983. Photos by Tom Velarde. In La Inglesia, p. 94.

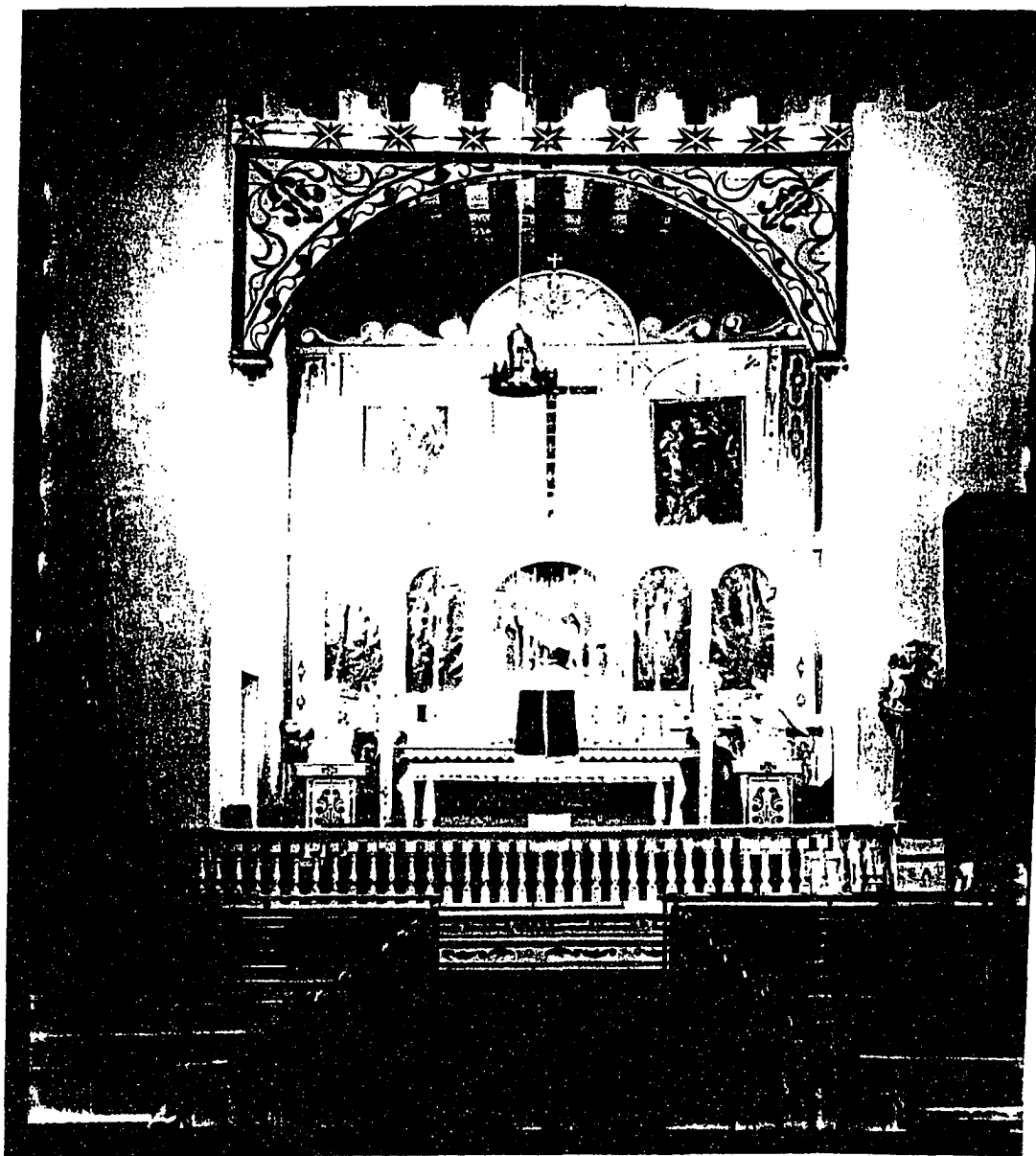


Figure 4.12 Interior of church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. This photograph is of the main altar screen taken in ca 1940 highlights the Saint Sulpice styled statues of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Anthony of Padua and the angels on either side of the altar. A plaster of paris copy of Michelangelo's *Pieta* is located behind the tabernacle. Photo by Ferenz Fedor. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 103534.

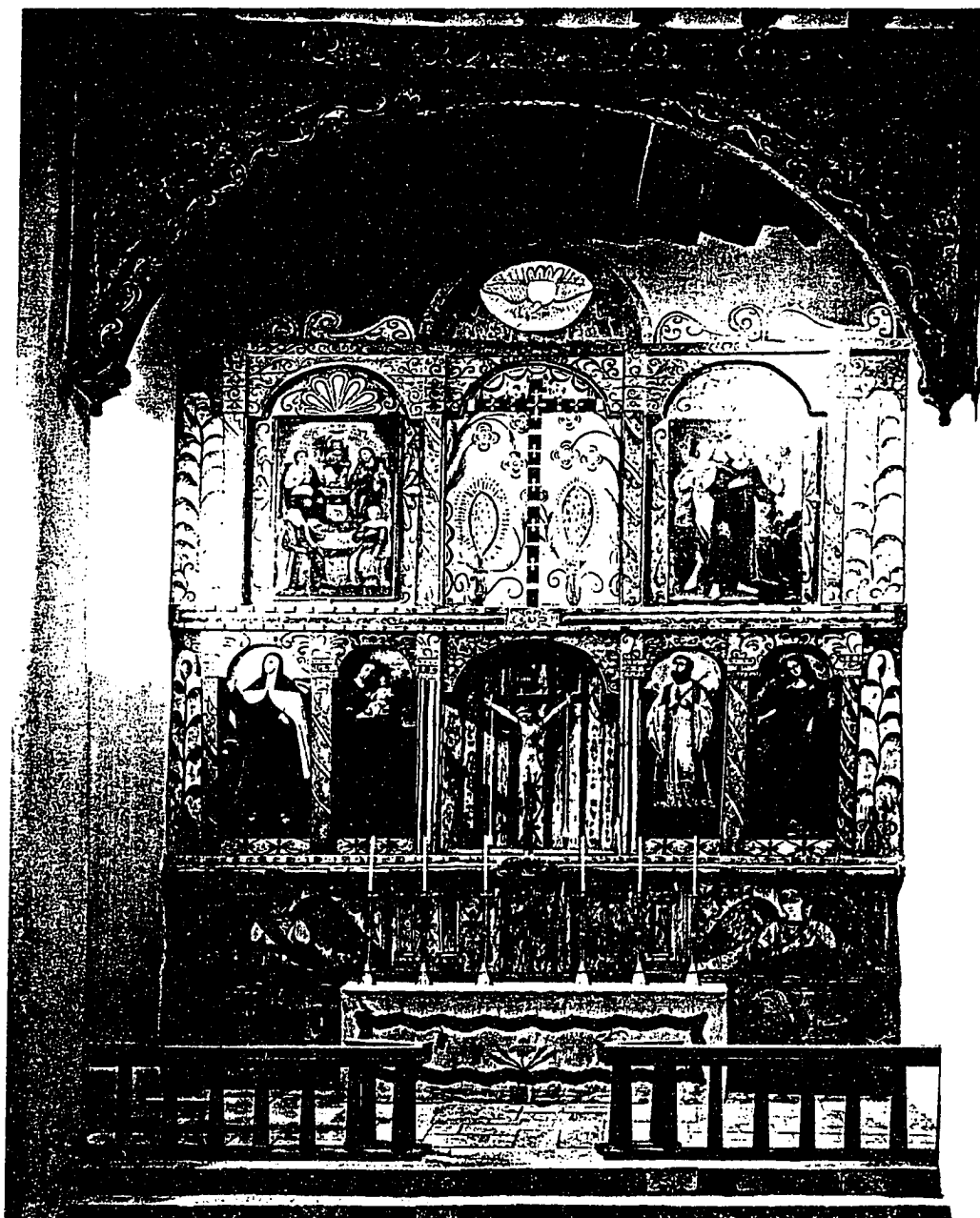


Figure 4.13 Interior of Santa Cruz after restoration in 1983. Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 84.

occurred in the 1940s. (Figure 4.12) But this change seems to have occurred after the parish came into greater contact with the outside world, with sons and daughters moving to cities for work, going off to fight in wars and giving up some of the old ways. The church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada, a long established parish church, which early on had French clergy assigned to it, does not show French influence in the religious art. The interiors show no sign of influence. There is no plaster of paris, Saint Sulpice art found in the church until after 1940. The subjects of the art in the church remained the traditional subjects of the Spanish New Mexican community. Attempts at architectural beautification were ruined by the weather and the nature of adobe. Santa Cruz de la Cañada does not see the French influence found in Santa Fe during the same time period.

Santa Cruz de la Cañada centered between Santa Fe and Taos was an old and very traditional cultural center. The Hispanic population was homogenous. Families intermarried, fought Indians together, farmed or raised livestock and all worshipped together. Confraternities existed from settlement, a Third Order of St. Francis formed early, and the Penitential brotherhood, Blood of Christ located in the Taos valley concerns Father Martínez in 1833.<sup>43</sup>

*Santos* are not merely inert objects. They are the focal point of a sacred interpersonal relationship between the devotee and the personage. While the

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<sup>43</sup>Letter from Antonio José Martínez to Señor Obispo [Bishop] Don José Antonio de Zubiríam, February 21, 1833 ACD (Archivo dela Catedral) cited in Wroth, Images of Penance, p.44.

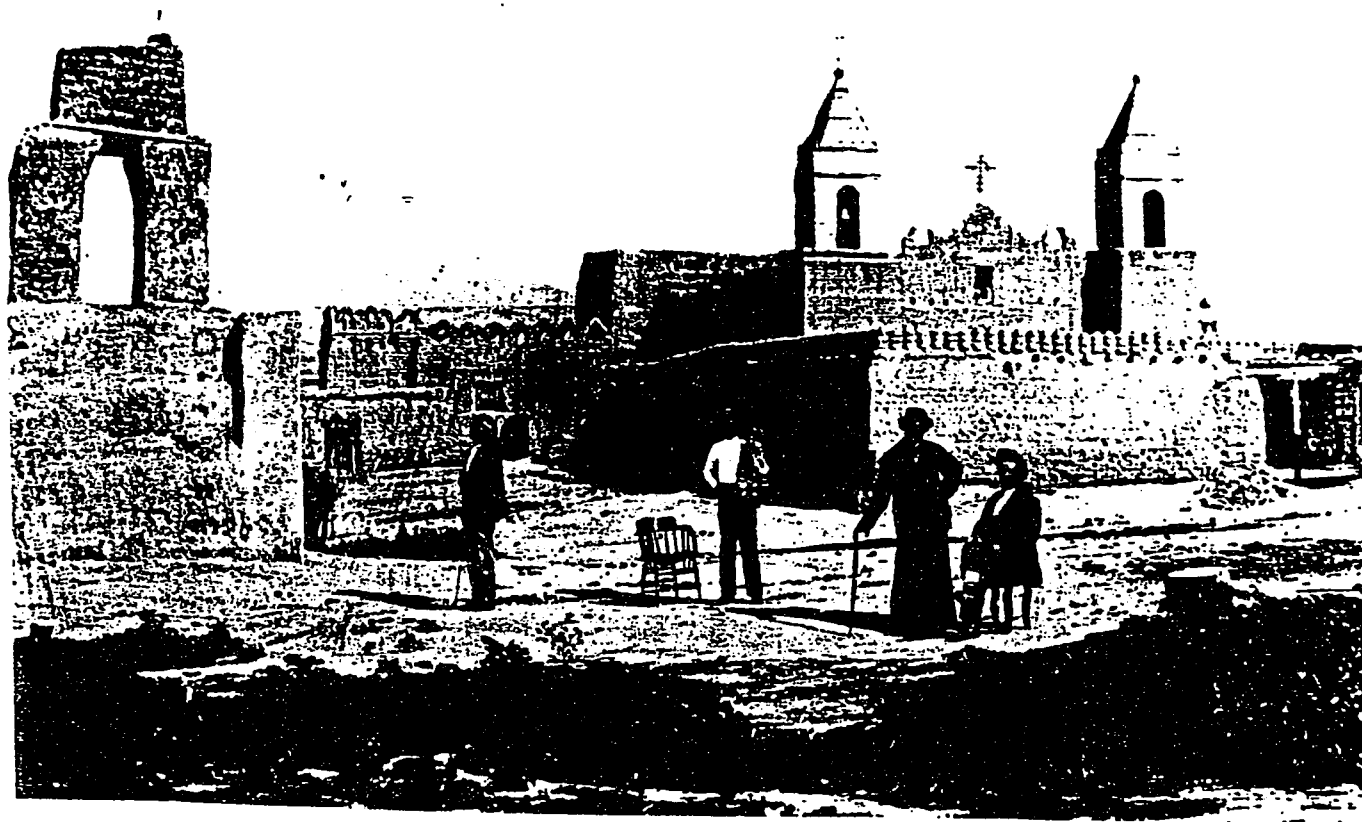


Figure 4.14 Exterior of church at Santa Cruz de la Cañada ca 1872. Photo by H. T. Hiester. Museum of New Mexico.



Figure 4.15 Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1881. Photo by William H. Jackson. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 54082.



Figure 4.16 Exterior church at Santa Cruz, 1897. Photo by Philip E. Harroun. Courtesy of Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 13926.



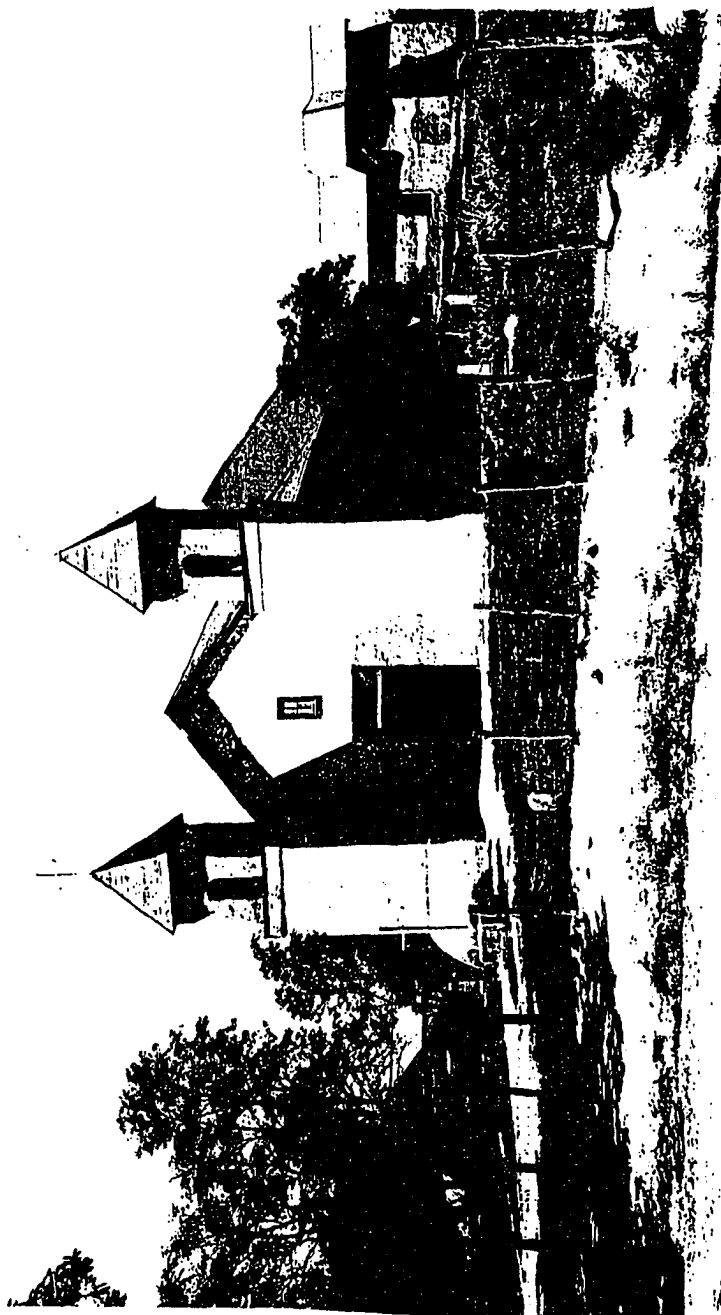


Figure 4.17 Exterior of church at Santa Cruz, 1930. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 9810.

*santo* is obviously material it was also part of a spiritual world as understood and experienced by New Mexicans. The pieces were admired not so much for their physical beauty as for their special powers.

In most private devotions of the nineteenth century New Mexican, the distance between the holy person and the mere mortal was not very great. All believed their prayers would gain a hearing if they prayed to the saints, angels, Our Lady or even the Christ child. It was as if they were members of the family.

One of Lorin Brown's W.P.A. accounts about Guadalupe "Tia 'Lupe" Martínez highlights the relationship between saint, *santo* and believer.

To her more than to most [the Córdova chapel] was the actual dwelling place of God, and it was her joy and satisfaction to see that all of its appointments were furbished and free of dust. She lavished special care on the various images of the saints, whom she loved and with whom she carried a loving though familiar conversation. Each was a distinct personality to her, and she knew the responsibilities each had assumed...She shook an admonitory finger in the face of Santa Inés and said "Mira! - Look! I will not make you that new dress if you do not help my nephew Manuel find his burro so his family will not lack wood...." "Are you not afraid of the good saint's anger if you treat her that way?" [Brown asked]. But Tias 'Lupe said charmingly, "No, I didn't mean it and Saint Inés knows that I didn't." Just the same, Tia 'Lupe made haste to light a fresh candle in front of Santa Inés', whose aid is sought in locating animals that have strayed.<sup>44</sup>

The place of the *santo* in the religious life of the ordinary New Mexican of the Santa Cruz valley, evidence of long term memberships to Confraternities and particularly to penitential brotherhoods, the rough terrain, cultural insularity

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<sup>44</sup>Lorin Brown, Interview with Guadalupe Martínez, as cited in Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, Foreword by Thomas J. Steele, S.J., p. xii.

and the strong Franciscan legacy found in this region made it virtually impossible for the clergy from France with different tastes in culture, art, and members of a dominating new government to make any deep seated changes.

## CHAPTER 5

### *SANTUARIO DE CHIMAYO*

On November 15, 1813, Bernardo Abeyta petitioned, in the name of nineteen families in the village of El Potrero, the Very Reverend Fray Sebastián Alvarez in Durango, requesting permission to build a chapel "to honor and venerate, with worthy worship, Our Lord and Redeemer, in his Advocation of Esquípuas."<sup>1</sup> This public chapel built by communal labor but owned and maintained by the Abeyta family was to replace a private chapel in the Abeyta home, also dedicated to Esquípuas. Abeyta received the license to establish the chapel as an auxiliary to their parish church which was located at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. As occurred throughout the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, chapels were built to relieve the necessity of long trips from a village to the parish churches which were located many miles from the village centers. The chapels made it possible for the priest to travel from congregation to congregation carrying with him only the instruments to say the Mass. While usually owned and maintained

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<sup>1</sup>deBorhegyi, Stephen F., "The Miraculous Shrines of Our Lord of Esquípuas in Guatemala and Chimayó, New Mexico," *El Palacio* 60 (March 1953): 83-111; reprint ed. *El Santuario de Chimayo*, (Santa Fe: The Spanish Colonial Arts Society, Inc., 1956), pp. 11-12.

by an individual family, the public chapel was intended to be open to all persons at all times. The inscription on the carved door leading from the narthex gives us a date of the chapel's completion: "This door was made by Pedro Domínguez as the devotion of the Reverend Father José Corea in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixteen at the request of this slave of the Lord."<sup>2</sup>

The exact appearance of the interior of the chapel in its earliest days is not known. There are no documents describing the interior; however, it must have had a number of paintings on hides, for the ecclesiastical Visitador of 1826, Reverend Agustín Fernández de San Vicente, in a letter dated August 25, 1826, commanded the removal by the priest in Santa Cruz of all santos painted on the hides of animals and on rough boards found in the chapel: "I command you [the parishioners of the Santuario de Chimayó] to remove from the chapel all the santos painted on hides of animals (sobre pieles de animales) and on rough boards (tablas defunctuosas). . ."<sup>3</sup>

This means that just about everything except the crucifix (carved by New Mexican santero Antonio Molleno) and the portable gold leaf frame behind the altar (thought to have been brought from Mexico) was temporarily removed

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<sup>2</sup>Photos of the door Kubler, Religious Architecture, Figures 107, 108. Translation from Borhegyi, El Santuario, p. 14. José Andrés Corea was the custodian of the parish of Santa Cruz between the years 1814-1818. The chapel was in use by May 8, 1818, as the Visitador General from Durango, Reverend Bautista Ladrón de Guervara noted visiting the *Santuario*.

<sup>3</sup>Bulletin (mimeographed) of Holy Cross Parish, Santa Cruz, New Mexico, August 31, 1952.

(Figure 5.1, 5.2). The altar screens found in the *Santuario* today were produced by Molleno, José Aragón, and Miguel Aragón and were in place by the arrival of the French clergy in 1851. French priests first said mass in the *Santuario* in 1869 with the assignment of the clergy to Santa Cruz de la Cañada. Typical of the region, many small chapels, oratorio and altars were assigned to the priests of a parish church.

The introduction of a new religious cult<sup>4</sup>, like Abeyta's introduction of Our Lord Esquípuas to the community of El Potrero, is always accompanied by legends.

The legend of Our Lord Esquípuas and a miraculous image began in southeastern Guatemala in the early days of the Spanish conquest. The Mayan indians lived in this region and the leader of the territory, according to some historians was, Esquípuas.<sup>5</sup> The story tells of the Chief Esquípuas agreeing to offer the Spaniards no resistance to avoid the slaughter of his people. The

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<sup>4</sup>Religious cults are not an unusual phenomenon. The apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe resulted in a cult under her protection. The apparition of the Virgin as the Immaculate Conception to Bernadotte resulted in the establishment of grottos dedicated to her around the world, including those in the United States at Notre Dame, Indiana, and San Juan Pueblo in New Mexico.

<sup>5</sup>The most reasonable explanation for the name is that Esquípuas is a Chorti indian term. The chorti dialect belongs to the southern Mayan linguistic stock. Originally pronounced Es-kip-ur-ha [kip'ur "raised"; and ha "stream or water"] Kipurha means spring. This region of Guatemala has many sulphurous hot water springs. The "Es" prefix is probably the usual Spanish prefix added to words to make them more pronounceable. deBorhegyi, *El Santuario*, Note #2, p.3.

Spaniards in honor of the chief, named the town established, Santiago de Esquípuas. It became a center of trade, and religious activity.

The Indians witnessed much of the brutality of the white men and the priests to minimize the transference to Christ commissioned Quirio Cataño to carve a Christ out of balsam and orange wood. This brown Christ was accepted by the Indians much more readily. Smoke from candles and incense turned the image black. It is a five foot image of Christ on a dark green cross. The cross is decorated with a sculptured vine and painted gold leaves.

In 1595, the crucifix was brought to the town of Esquípuas and housed in a chapel built upon the site of an Indian shrine, close to the hot springs. The image became famous for its healing power. At the Sanctuary of Esquípuas in Guatemala is the manufacture of little tiny clay tablets, called *benditos* or *tierra del Santo*, which are purchased by the the pilgrims. The cakes are made from cleaned and pressed kaolin taken from the mountains of the area. Two inches by one inch and one-quarter inch thick, these cakes are stamped with the embossed pictures of the Virgin, the saints or the crucifix of Esquípuas. They are blessed by the priests in the church and eaten or dissolved in water and drunk to heal illness, particularly problems with childbirth.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The tablets were analysed by Dr. L. P. Harrington of the Yale University Laboratory of Research of Health and they contained sixty-five percent silica, sixteen percent alumina, six percent iron oxide, two percent magnesia and some sodium, potassium and calcium. While the tablets may have served as a buffer against excessive acidity and and irritated gastro-intestinal tract he believed the tablets were of greater psychological value than medical. deBorhegyi, *El*

Geophagy, clay eating, and the using of clay in cooking is a custom found in many cultures. This practice was also found in the American Southwest especially among the Pueblo Indians.<sup>7</sup>

Abeyta's knowledge of the advocacy (perhaps gained from a trip to Guatemala) brought back to his home chapel and finally transferred to the *Santuario*, which was located on the site of healing mud (known to the Indians for years), was bound originate many stories. During Abeyta's lifetime there was little confusion concerning the connection between the healing power of the earth and the advocacy of "Our Lord and Redeemer Esquípuas." It seems likely that Abeyta, knowing the legend of the healing earth in Guatemala, associated it with the similar health-giving properties of the mud at Chimayó. He built the chapel in Chimayó to worship and venerate Our Lord of Esquípuas above the pit of mud. It is believed that he was the one who gave the directions to the santero, Antonio Molleno, to carve and paint the Crucifix of Our Lord Esquípuas to resemble the Crucifix in Guatemala. The carving of tree branches

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Santuario, Note #5, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup>Berthold Laufer, Geophagy, Field Museum of Natural History, Pub. 280, Anthropological Series, Vol XVIII, No. 2 (Chicago: Field Museum of Natural History, 1930), pp. 170-172, 178-184; Charles Wagley, "The Social and Religious Life of a Guatemalan Village," American Anthropologist 51 #4 (October 1949): 21; deBorhegyi, El Santuario, pp. 4-8.





Figure 5.1 Our Lord of Esquípuas by Molleno. This large crucifix is nearly six feet tall. the cross is painted dark green and decorated with painted gold leaves. Photo by Byron Wahl. In deBorhegyi, "Miraculous Shrine," p. 7.

into a cross, the painting of the cross and the style of the Christ match the iconography of the Guatemalan crucifix.<sup>8</sup>

After Abeyta's death in 1856, no one remained who knew the real reason for the shrine and legends began to be circulated. Leaving no written testimonies to explain the shrine, stories were passed down by word of mouth. As time passed, truth was replaced by legend. Stephen F. deBorhegyi, in the most complete study to date of the *Santuario*, interviewed the granddaughter of Bernardo Abeyta in La Puebla, New Mexico (1953), and received this version of the legend:

According to her story, with which most of my informants of Chimayó agree, it was during a Holy Week when Bernardo Abeyta, a good member of the fraternity of Jesús Nazareno or Penitentes, was performing the customary penances of the society around the hills of Potrero that he suddenly saw a bright light shining from a hole in the ground near the Santa Cruz river. He rushed to the spot and with his bare hands dug out the miraculous crucifix of Our Lord of Esquípuilas. He called all of the people of El Potrero to see and venerate the precious finding. They soon notified Father Sebastián Alvarez, and a procession was organized to take the crucifix to Santa Cruz. It was placed in the niche of the main altar. Next morning the crucifix disappeared from the niche and was found again in the same hole where it was first discovered. Another procession was formed to carry it back to Santa Cruz, but the same thing happened this time and once more after it had been taken to Santa Cruz for the third time. By this everyone understood that the crucifix wished to remain in El Potrero and, to venerate it properly, a chapel was built above the hole.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Frank, *Kingdon of the Saints*, pp. 84-108; Boyd, *Popular Arts*, p. 353.

<sup>9</sup>deBorhegyi, *El Santuario*, pp. 17-18.

Abeyta was an early charismatic leader of a penitential brotherhood. The main altar *reredos* includes panels depicting the five wounds of Jesus and the Franciscan emblems. Side *reredos* include *bultos* of Jesus the Nazarene, Our Lady of Sorrows (2) and Our Lady of Solitude all of which were prominent in Penitential celebrations of Holy Week. All of these depictions are seen in other chapels and churches where the brotherhoods had influence. The chapel was dedicated to Father Martínez of Taos, known after the establishment of the French hierarchy to challenge Bishop Lamy for power. The remainder of the above legend fits the archetype of the discovery of a religious object.

There are several other legends, such as one attributing discovery of the crucifix to a young girl María Ignacia Martínez, a relative of Bernardo Abeyta's, while she was fetching water at the river. This version is kept alive by the Martínez family. Another version, mentioned by L. Bradford Prince and Benjamin Read in their works of 1915 and 1916, refers to a kind, devout priest, killed by Indians, buried with his crucifix and then many generations later the burial site being discovered by the people. The crucifix was revealed by erosion of the river and the three processions were repeated to Santa Cruz with the object returning each time as in the Abeyta legend.<sup>10</sup> Today many of the legends

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<sup>10</sup>Prince, *Spanish Missions*, pp. 317-318; Benjamin Read, "El Santuario de Chimayó," *El Palacio* 3 #4 (August 1916):82. Usually legends describe the discovery of images of the Virgin Mary by shepherd, cowherds, and farmers, and although details vary considerably, all have a strikingly uniform thematic structure. Holy images are usually "found in the ground by knocking a dirt clod aside, in caves while fetching lost sheep, in ponds, in streams, on islands and in

survive. The hole of healing mud is still the center of the *Santuario's* power, with hundreds of pairs of crutches, photographs, and ex-votos<sup>11</sup> left by individuals healed at this shrine.

### **Santo Niño de Atocha**

After Abeyta died in 1856, Severiano Medina, a neighbor said to have been jealous of the fame and revenues<sup>12</sup> gained from the *Santuario*, was stricken with a severe case of rheumatism. According to one legend while in pain he received a revelation instructing him to pray for healing to Santo Niño de Atocha whose shrine was in Plateros, Fresmillo, Mexico. He did, was cured, and made

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trees." The shepherd is usually led to the discovery by the miraculous happening, such as an unnatural light, the appearance of the Virgin in a vision, or an unexpected noise. Distinctive features include "mysterious lights, celestial harmonies, demonstrations of adoration and . . . attempts to carry the image and worship it privately, incredulity on the part of the people of the town where the miraculous vision is reported, attempts to carry the image to a more comfortable and accessible place, return by the image two or three times to the site of the vision, resolution to build a church in the designated place, and frequent veneration of the image there by people of the town." Edith Turner and Victor Turner, Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 41; On legends of the statue of Esquípuas see Cleofas M. Jaramillo, Shadows of the Past (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, n.d.), pp. 107-108; Elsie Clews Parsons, Isleta, New Mexico Bureau of American Ethnology 47th Annual Report (Albuquerque: Calvin Horn Pub., 1974), pp. 415-416; deBorhegyi, El Santuario, pp. 17-18.

<sup>11</sup>An ex-voto is a painting or other small object left in a chapel for the fulfillment of a vow or offering, usually the curing of an illness.

<sup>12</sup>In order to maintain a private chapel for public use donations were accepted. Often an individual believing himself or herself cured by the healing mud or prayers would make contributions. These monies were the property of the chapel owners, not the Catholic church.

a pilgrimage to Plateros bringing back with him a statue of Santo Niño (which in reality was a papier mache doll forced into a sitting position to resemble the Santo Niño de Atocha). In 1857, he built a private chapel dedicated to Santo Niño on land dedicated by the community.<sup>13</sup> By 1858, the chapel was completed and ornamented and permission granted to celebrate Mass in it. The Santa Cruz parish Baptismal Book of 1857 records the baptism of one Manuela de Atocha the first child with this cult name.

Soon it was believed that Santo Niño traveled through the countryside at night and as a consequence wore out his shoes. Pilgrims frequently brought baby shoes to replace the ones worn out during his travels. By 1864, a new village had been founded with the name El Santo Niño. It was located near the old Santa Cruz mission. As this chapel gained popularity, the popularity of the *Santuario* began to decline. Cleofas Jaramillo in her book, Shadows of the Past, recalls a story of Santo Niño's abilities told to her when she was a child before the turn of the century:

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<sup>13</sup>Santa Fe New Mexican, March 18, 1979. Another legend of the discovery of the statue related that a man was driving his oxen to his field, accompanied by his little daughter, when the child heard a church bell ring beneath the ground. She begged her father to dig it out. He uncovered the bell and digging further discovered a wooden statue of Santa Niño de Atocha. Afterwards. . . the Holy Child was responsible for many miraculous cures. For the stories of Santo Niño see Roland Dickey, New Mexico Village Arts (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1949), pp. 171-174; Paul A. F. Walter, "New Mexico Lourdes," El Palacio 3 #2 (January 1916), p. 3; Read, "El Santuario de Chimayo," p. 82; Mitchell A. Wilder with Edgar Breitenbach, Santos: The Religious Folk Art of New Mexico (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum of Colorado Fine Arts Center, 1943), p. 32.

A mother whose two-year-old son was stolen by Indians during a raid on her town had for years hunted and prayed to find him, but unsuccessfully. Hearing of the miraculous Santo Niño, she promised a novena in honor of the Holy Child. She poured out her grief in prayers. The last day of the novena came and she had not heard of her child. Frantic with grief, the mother strolled out of the house and followed a road leading to the hills through an arroyo. She had not gone far when she stumbled on an object in the road. Stooping down she picked up the object - a little hat carved out of stone, round-brimmed, with two carved ostrich plumes across the high top. 'A Santo Niño hat' she was thinking, as she walked along examining the little article. She heard a wagon approach, and looked up. She saw a man driving, and sitting beside him was a four-year-old boy. Recognizing him as her son, the distracted mother ran up to the wagon, signalling the man to stop. 'My son!' cried the mother, as the child jumped down into her arms. When the happy mother turned to thank the man, both he and the wagon had disappeared. No trace of them could be seen on the road.<sup>14</sup>

By the 1890s, numerous stories about Santo Niño and his wanderings and miracles abound.<sup>15</sup>

The Chavez family (turn of the century owners of the *Santuario*) became concerned with the threat to the popularity of Our Lord Esquipulas by Santo Niño and announced that in the *Santuario* not only did their Santo Niño walk the countryside at night giving aid, but so did St. Joseph, St. Rafael and Santiago. Baby shoes are now found on the *bultos* of St. Joseph, and St. Rafael as well as Santo Niño.

Today Santo Niño reigns supreme at both locations and is credited with healing powers, along with the healing dirt. In Christianity, seldom are healing

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<sup>14</sup>Jaramillo, Shadows of the Past, pp. 108-109.

<sup>15</sup>deBorhegyi, El Santuario, p. 20-21; Alice Marriott, The Potter of San Ildefonso (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), pp. 30-38.

powers attributed to this manifestation of the Christ Child, but as time went on the sacred earth at Chimayó, the miraculous crucifix of Our Lord of Esquípuas and the Santo Niño de Atocha were all interwoven in the popular mind.

The legends and the actual creation of new traditions and beliefs are significant. It shows the openness of the rural population to new devotions and advocations even as they maintain their strong Passion-centered focus. The popular mind was willing to accept miracles and the unusual activities of the Christ child traveling at night to help the parishioners. These changes were occurring concurrently with the arrival of the new French clergy with their own new devotions and advocations. The question was not whether the local population had the ability to make changes in their devotions but whether they would accept the changes brought by the new clergy.

#### *Art of Santuario de Chimayó*

Before his death, Abeyta was able to see his chapel completely decorated. The art in this chapel was produced by some of the best santeros of the day, among them, Antonio Molleno, José Aragón, and Miguel Aragón. All produced the majority of their work between 1820 and 1850.<sup>16</sup> There are five *reredos* located around the chapel. A floor plan of the chapel with the placement of the

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<sup>16</sup>E. Boyd, Saints and Saint Makers of New Mexico (Santa Fe: Laboratory of Anthropology, 1946), pp. 37, 41. 51; Charles D. Carroll, "Miguel Aragón, A Great Santero," El Palacio L #3 (March 1943):59-62; Oliver LaFarge, "New Mexico" Holiday Magazine (February 1952): 43; deBorhegyi, El Santuario, p. 15.

*reredos* illustrates standard New Mexican chapel design (Figure 5.2). The colonial churches of sixteenth-century Mexico are found to have eliminated the three-aisled plan which was usual in European religious architecture. In the seventeenth-century in the vast number of smaller parish churches, the complicated structural problems of having lateral aisles were avoided by illuminating the aisles. Similarly, in New Mexico, the simple plan of an open nave was constructed. Adobe brick was not sound enough for the large pillars and supports which were necessary for the building of multiple aisles. Generally, the entrance into the church, the narthex at *Chimayo*, was smaller than the width of the nave itself. The width of the nave was governed by the length of the roofing timbers available. If there were to be subsidiary chapels or altars to the main altar they were generally developed from the ends of the transept, in the case of the *Santuario*, the Sacristy was build off the left side of the sanctuary.<sup>17</sup> Along the west wall (left) of the Chapel two *reredos*, A and B were produced by José Aragón<sup>18</sup> (Figures 5.3, 5.4).

According to family tradition, José Aragón was a Spaniard, born in northern Spain who came to New Mexico at the end of the Spanish period (1821) to settle and produce art. Aragón's neat lettering, fine linework and the signing of his works both indicate a man able to read and write and an *santero* from

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<sup>17</sup>Kubler, Religious Architecture of New Mexico, pp. 29-32.

<sup>18</sup>Good studies on José Aragón's work include Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, pp. 110-144; Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 366-372.



another place. Most of the native New Mexican *santeros* did not sign their work. The exact date of his appearance in New Mexico is unknown, although a *bulto* reliability dated to 1820 is signed by him.

In his work, Aragón shows a real piety with subjects calm, serene, with no violence or pain appearing in his works. Even his *bultos* of the crucified Christ do not have the extreme renderings of pain and blood seen in later works. In the total body of his works, Aragón often depicts the Archangel Gabriel. Gabriel is the guardian angel and is messenger of God announcing important births including those of Samson, John the Baptist and Jesus.<sup>19</sup> As the Guardian of humanity, Gabriel was the popular in religious art. He is often portrayed in the Annunciation to Mary. In byzantine-styled and early medieval-styled works, he symbolizes the power and majesty of God the Father. As devotion to Mary increases, the cult of Mary grew in the medieval period, Gabriel is represented kneeling before her.<sup>20</sup>

Family tradition has it that José Aragón did not want to become an American citizen and for this reason moved down to Seneca near El Paso. He

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<sup>19</sup>Judges 13:3-7; Luke 1:11-20; Luke 1:26-38.

<sup>20</sup>On José Aragón's style, subjects see Boyd, Popular Arts of New Mexico, pp. 366-374; Frank, Kingdon of the Saints, pp. 110-144. On the iconography of the Archangel Gabriel see Ducet-Suchaux, The Bible and the Saints, pp. 155-156; Apostolos-Cappadona, Dictionary of Christian Art, p. 140.

probably left Rio Arriba awhile before 1846. The last panel dated by Aragón is 1835.<sup>21</sup>

Most of the subjects of José Aragón's A and B *reredos* are typical of a Spanish work. In the style of the *reredos* produced during the golden age of *santero* production, these screens were produced of planed pine, with a gesso ground and painted with tempera paint. At the very top of "A" is Our Father God, rendered as a man bent over looking down upon the people. His head is surrounded by a nimbus, indicating his divinity. Stylistically, both screens have three rows, divided into three sections, each with renderings inside, either in paint or a *bulto*, in a niche (Figure 5.3, 5.4).

Screen "A" begins in the upper left hand corner with Our Lady of Carmel holding the Christ child, in the center, the Christ Child, and in the upper right corner, Our Lady of Candelarias. Our Lady of Carmel, holding the Christ child in one arm and small brown scapular (two pieces of cloth about two inches square decorated with the appropriate order, it is held together by two tapes and is worn over the shoulders). She is evoked for the release of souls from purgatory. The standing Christ child is a bit unusual, yet with Aragón's interest in the pious and serene, the rendering of Jesus as the child who symbolizes the youth of Jesus is in character. Our Lady of Candelarias, refers back to a region of Spain.

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<sup>21</sup>Boyd, Popular Art of New Mexico, p. 374.

On the second row beginning at the left, is St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Franciscans, lover of nature and devotee of the child Jesus, holding a Jerusalem cross. In the center is St. Jerome with a lion. This is typical iconography of St. Jerome, the hermit and one of the Four Fathers of the Church. St. Jerome is also found on Rafael Aragón (no relationship) *reredos* at Santa Cruz de la Cañada. On the right, is St. Anthony of Padua holding the Christ child. St. Anthony of Padua is also a Franciscan saint. He lived in the thirteenth century and after initially joining the Augustinians, he heard St. Francis speak and left to join him. The two men became good friends and because of his oratorical ability, Francis entrusted the educational work of the order to him. He preached poverty, penance and called upon the people to holy lives and spent much time comforting the poor and criticizing the wealthy. He was loved by the poor and over time his cult traveled across Europe. From the seventeenth century onward, St. Anthony of Padua was invoked to find lost things, to regain health and to satisfy any wish whatsoever. He died in Padua in 1231 at the age of thirty-six. St. Anthony of Padua is one of the most popular saints found in New Mexico. The belief in his ability to find lost animals made him a helpful saint to have around. He was also the patron of the home.<sup>22</sup>

The final row is made up of two paintings and has a *bulto* in the center. All three are of the archangels. On the left is Gabriel with a sword, on the right

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<sup>22</sup>Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 298; Duchet-Suchaux, The bible and the Saints, pp. 38-39; Ferguson, Signs and Symbols, p. 105.

is Michael with the scales and the cross of Jerusalem standing on a dragon. Just as seen on the *reredos* of Molleno at Santa Cruz, the archangel Michael holds a scale to weigh the soul of the dead, to judge it's worthiness to enter heaven. In the center is a carved *bulto* of the archangel Rafael. Rafael holds a fish. It is this *bulto* which wears baby shoes. It is one of the group who travel at night making miracles.

Screen "B", also by José Aragón, begins at the top with the Trinity. Aragón in his portrayals of the Trinity, drew them as three identical young men. In the center of each there is a different symbol, identifying each: a lamb for Christ, God the Son; a sun for God the Father; and a dove for God the Holy Spirit. In the upper left hand corner of the first row is the archangel Rafael with the fish and a stick, in the center is Our Lady of Guadalupe and on the right is the Archangel Michael with the scales. On the second row, on the left is St. John Nepomuceno and St. Joseph with the Christ child and flowering rod. In Christian art, St. Joseph, the husband of the Virgin Mary, often has a flowering staff at his side. This may have been a error, for while Joseph is often shown with a flowering staff, usually, when he is holding the Christ child, he normally holds a lily which is the iconographic symbol of chastity. Thanks to the Jesuits, St. Joseph became the patron saint of Mexico in 1555 and of Canada in 1624. The final row on this screen is made up of *bultos*. On the left is a small rendering of St. Joseph (also with baby shoes) and on the right is St. Anthony of

Padua. In the center is the one real reference to the Passion. It is a *bulto* of Jesus the Nazarene and is clothed in purple robes. This work is the only one on the two screens which directly relates to the Passion of Christ.

Screen "C" is found behind the altar (Figure 5.5). This *reredos* was made by Antonio Molleno, the same *santero* who carved the large crucifix of Our Lord Esquípuas found in the center of this work. The subjects on this screen relate more directly to the Passion Christ. In the upper left hand corner there is a depiction of the symbols for the Cross with four inverted pyramids representing the five wounds on Jesus' body and lances through the cross. In the center is the Franciscan emblem of the crossed arms of Jesus and Francis, each showing wounds in the hands. On the upper right is the Cross of Jerusalem which was also known as the Cross of the Holy Sepulchre (the burial place of Jesus).

On either side the *bulto* of Our Father Esquípuas, are painted curtains with geometric designs upon them and behind the altar can be seen paintings, on the left a stalk of wheat as a representation of the bread of the Last Supper and Christ's body and on the right a bunch of grapes as a symbol of the wine and Christ's blood.

Miguel Aragón and Antonio Molleno in *reredos* D and E continue Spanish traditions with God at the top of the screen, this time as a dove representing the Holy Ghost (Figure 5.6) St. Joseph found with the Christ child and his flowering rod is typical of this period and along with St. Stanislas and St. Gertrude are

found in the top row of a two row screen by Miguel Aragón. Screen "D", on the second row on the left is St. Rosalia of Palermo and on the right St. Teresa. In the center are two *bultos*, one of St. Joseph and one of the Virgin.

Screen "E" produced by Antonio Molleno is a bit more problematic. There are several saints that cannot be identified by attributes. Those images which can be identified are on the first row in the center, the cross of Esquímulas or the so called *arbores de la Cruz* (Cross of the Tree) and on the right Our Lady of Sorrows. On the second row, the saints on the right and left of the *bultos* are unidentified with the *bulto* that of St. Anthony of Padua.

There were two crucifixes in the sanctuary of the *Santuario*. The large is Molleno's. (Figure 5.1) The other is a small (eighteen inches) crucifix that was located on the altar in a glass window case. (It is now located in the room with the sacred mud.)<sup>23</sup> Following along the walls of the nave and sacristy of this chapel there are twenty-one *bultos*, wood and silk banners and several commercial statues of Santa Niño de Atocha on the altar table.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> According to an interview conducted by Elizabeth Kay with Elma Bal, a Chimayó store owner, for her book on the various traditions in the Chimayó Valley, it is the smaller one which is the recipient of the legends of a miraculous discovery. Elizabeth Kay, *Chimayo Valley Traditions* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1987), p. 45. During my visit in 1992, the smaller crucifix was located in the side room with the sacred dirt.

<sup>24</sup> This is a list of all of the items found along the walls with the numbers corresponding to the placement on the drawing of the floorplan of the *Santuario* in Figure 5.3. 1. Our Lady Immaculata, 2. San Rafael holding a fish (in niche in *reredos* A), 3. St. Joseph (in niche in *reredos* B), 4. Jesús Nazareno clothes in purple robes (in niche in *reredos* B), 5. St. Anthony (in niche in *reredos* B), 6.

All of the *bultos* are of Hispanic origin. The modern ceramic statue of the Holy Child of Prague is undated. Many subjects found as *bultos* or painted on the *reredos* are identified with the old Hispanic Passion traditions: Our Lady Immaculata, St. Joseph, Jesus Nazareno, Our Lady of Sorrows, and Our Lady of Solitude. Two lithographs are located on either side of the main altar screen.

They are lithographs, the subject of which, would indicate some French clerical devotional influence since they depict the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart (sometimes called the Immaculate Heart) of Mary (Figures 5.7, 5.8) The Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Imaculate Heart of Mary are not seen in New Mexico as art until after the American conquest and the

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Modern ceramic statue of Holy Child of Prague, 7. Unidentified saint (on deBorhegyi's list, not there today), 8. Crucifix ion glass window case on altar, also on altar eight commercial statues of Santo Niño de Atocha (today, located in the room off Sacristy with mud), 9. Crucifix representing Our Lord Esquipulas, behind the altar, 10. angel, 11. Our Lady of Sorrows, 12. Our Lady of Solitude (hanging on the wall), 13. St. Joseph (in niche in *reredos* D), 14. Virgin (in niche in *reredos* D), 15. Equestrian statue of Santiago (Saint James), clad as a Mexican caballero, 16., St. Anthony (in niche in *reredos* E), 17. Our Lady of Sorrows (hanging on the wall), 18. Unidentified saint (hanging on the wall), 19. Banner of silk with the inscription of "Our Lady of Carmel, 1923" printed on the banner representing the Virgin in this manifestation by Currier and Ives made sometime near the end of the nineteenth century. 20. 21. 22. Wooden banners with tin decorations (not there today), 23. wooden banner covered with silk on which a lion, sun and cross were embroidered, 24. *retablo* in sacristy, probably painted by a follower of Miguel Aragón, of Our Lady of Candelarias, donated to the *Santuario*, 25. Block print from Mexico representing an unidentified saint, 26. represents the dozens of canes, crutches and other items left by cured pilgrims, 27. Our Lady of Cadelarias, 28, A silk clad Jesus, made to resemble Santo Niño de Atocha, but actually the Holy Child of Prague made to sit, 29. Three wooden figures representing the Holy Family. This list was made in 1953. deBorhegyi, *El Santuario*, pp. 25-26.

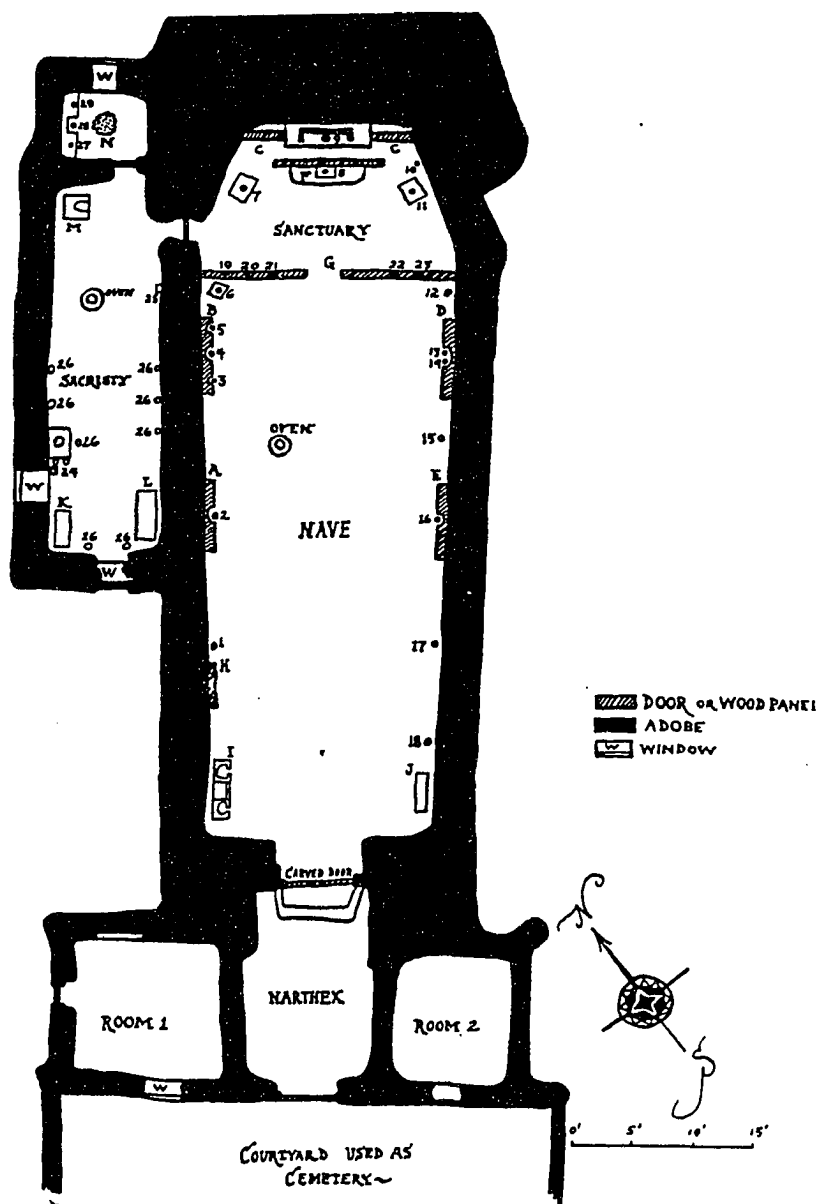


Figure 5.2 Floor Plan of *Santuario* as seen in deBorgheyi, "Miraculous Shrine," p.24.





Figure 5.3 Interior of the *Santuario de Chimayó* ca 1946-53. On the left are two *reredos* by José Aragón. Photo by Ferenz Fedor. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 103531.

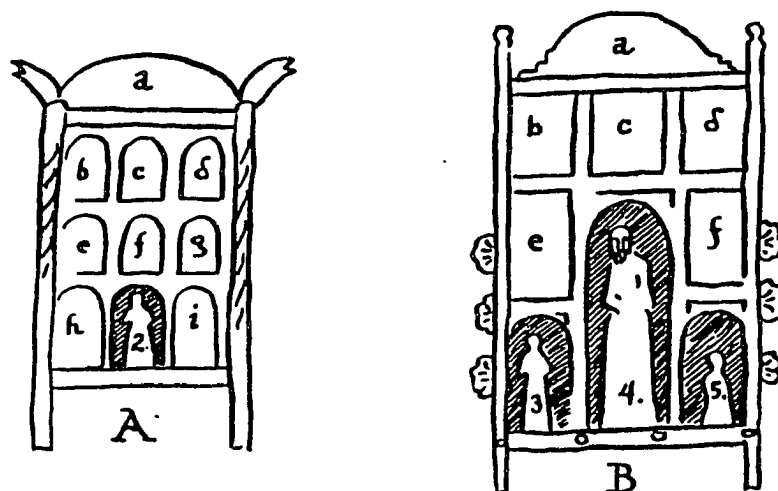


Figure 5.4 Rough sketches of the A and B *reredos* found in the *Santuario*. A and B are believed to have been the work of José Aragón. Subjects of *reredos* A are from the top down, left to right: *Nuestro Padre Dios* (Our Father God), Our Lady of Carmel with the Christ child, Child Jesus, *Nuestra Señora de las Candelarias*, St. Francis of Assisi holding a cross of Jerusalem, St. Jerome with a trumpet and lion, St. Anthony of Padua and the child Jesus. St. Gabriel with a sword and St. Michael with a scale and the cross of Jerusalem standing upon a dragon. The *bulto* in the center of this *reredos* is of St. Rafael holding a fish. This *bulto* wears baby shoes. Subjects of *reredos* B are from the top down, left to right: Holy Trinity, St. Rafael with a fish and stick, Our Lady of Guadalupe, St. Michael with scales, St. John Nepomuceno, and St. Joseph with the Christ child and flowering rod. The three *bultos* are: St. Joseph (also in baby shoes), *Jesu Nazareno* clothed in purple robes, and St. Anthony.

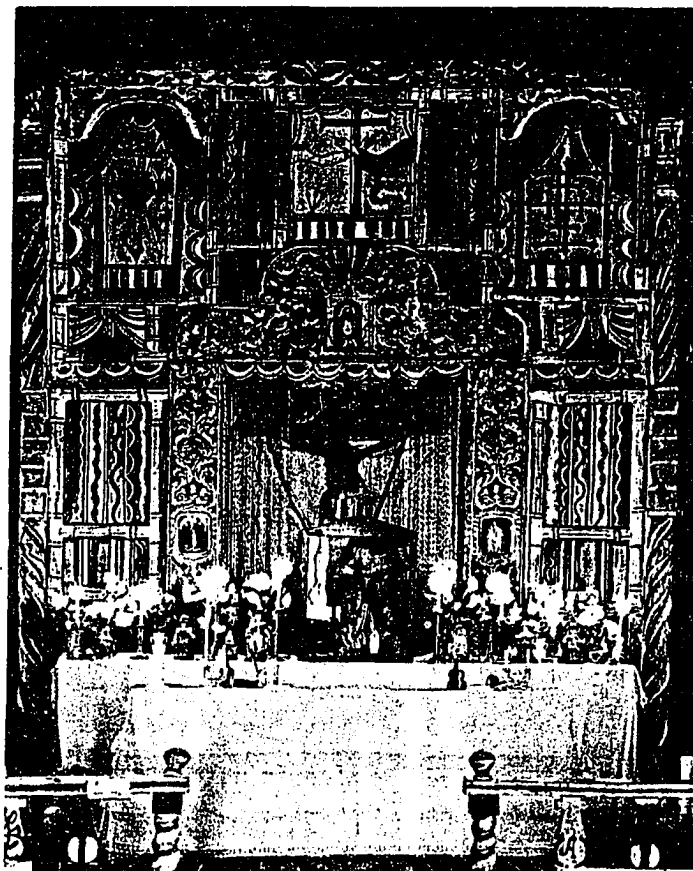


Figure 5.5 Main *reredos* behind the altar. Photo by Byron Wahl. In deBorhegyi, "Miraculous Shrine," p. 16. This *reredos* was executed by Antonio Molleno. The subjects, top to bottom, left to right are: Holy Cross with five wounds of Jesus and a lance, the Franciscan emblem showing the arm of Christ crossing the arm of St. Francis both with wounds in the hands, the Cross of Jerusalem (also called the Cross of the Holy Sepulchre), curtains with geometric designs, and behind the altar table on the left is a stalk of wheat as a representation of the bread of the Last Supper and on the right a bunch of grape as a symbol of the wine. This screen was made to fit tightly around the gold frame which surrounds the *bulto* of the Crucifix. The *bulto* of Our Lord Esquípuas was also produced by Molleno. In this photo taken in the 1950s, a close look at the gold frame surrounding the *bulto* reveals a lithograph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A photo from 1930 shows nothing in that space.

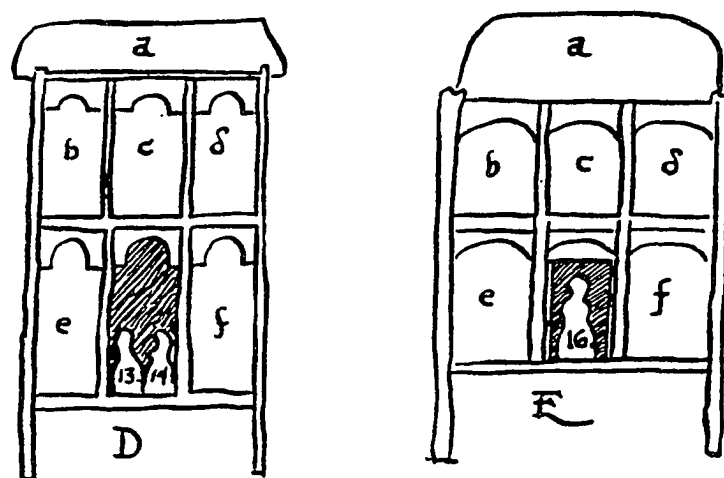


Figure 5.6 Rough sketches of *reredos* D and E. D was produced by Miguel Aragón. The subjects top to bottom, left to right are: Holy Ghost in the form of a white dove, St. Stanislas, St. Joseph with the Christ child and the flowering rod. St. Gertrude with a banner, St. Rosalia of palermo, and St. Teresa. In the niches there are two *bultos*, one of St. Joseph and one of the Virgin. *Reredos* E was produced by Molleno. At the very top of this screen is a carved and painted shell pattern. Below, from top to bottom, left to right is an unidentified saint with a banner, the cross of Esquípuas or the so-called *arbores de la Cruz* (Cross of the Tree), Our Lady of Sorrows and two more unidentified saints.

coming of French clergy to the region. Not only the subjects, but the form of the art as well, lithography would date the pieces after the Civil War.<sup>25</sup>

The traditions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary date from the middle seventeenth century. The Sacred Heart is not merely honored as the most principal member of the body of Christ but it is seen as the perfect symbol of the infinite love of Christ. Theologically the Hypostatic Union, the indivisibility and inseparability of the divine and the human, are symbolized in this devotion. "The devotion to the Sacred Heart is a devotion to the loving Heart of Jesus Christ - the Heart of flesh of the God-Man as symbolizing His own great love."<sup>26</sup> This tradition was particularly tied to the French church due to the "Great Apparitions" received in the mid 1670s by the Visitation nun, Sr. Mary Margaret Alacoque. These apparitions included visitations by Christ and His admonition to share her knowledge of the Sacred Heart with the rest of the world.

Later, in the nineteenth-century a large number of apparitions of the Virgin were seen throughout France. These include Catherine Emmerich's vision of the house of Our Lady in Ephesus (1824), Catherine Laboure's vision

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<sup>25</sup>The importance of using several different kinds of evidence is highlighted in this example. The research completed by deBoreghyi was well done, but he saw no apparent need to mention the lithographs. Fortunately, the photographs did not discriminate and the lithographs were seen even if not noted in the written study.

<sup>26</sup>Arthur R. McGratty The Sacred Heart: Yesterday and Today (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1951), pp. 6-8.



Figure 5.7 Interior of *Santuario* in 1911. Photo by Jesse L. Nusbaum. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 13754.

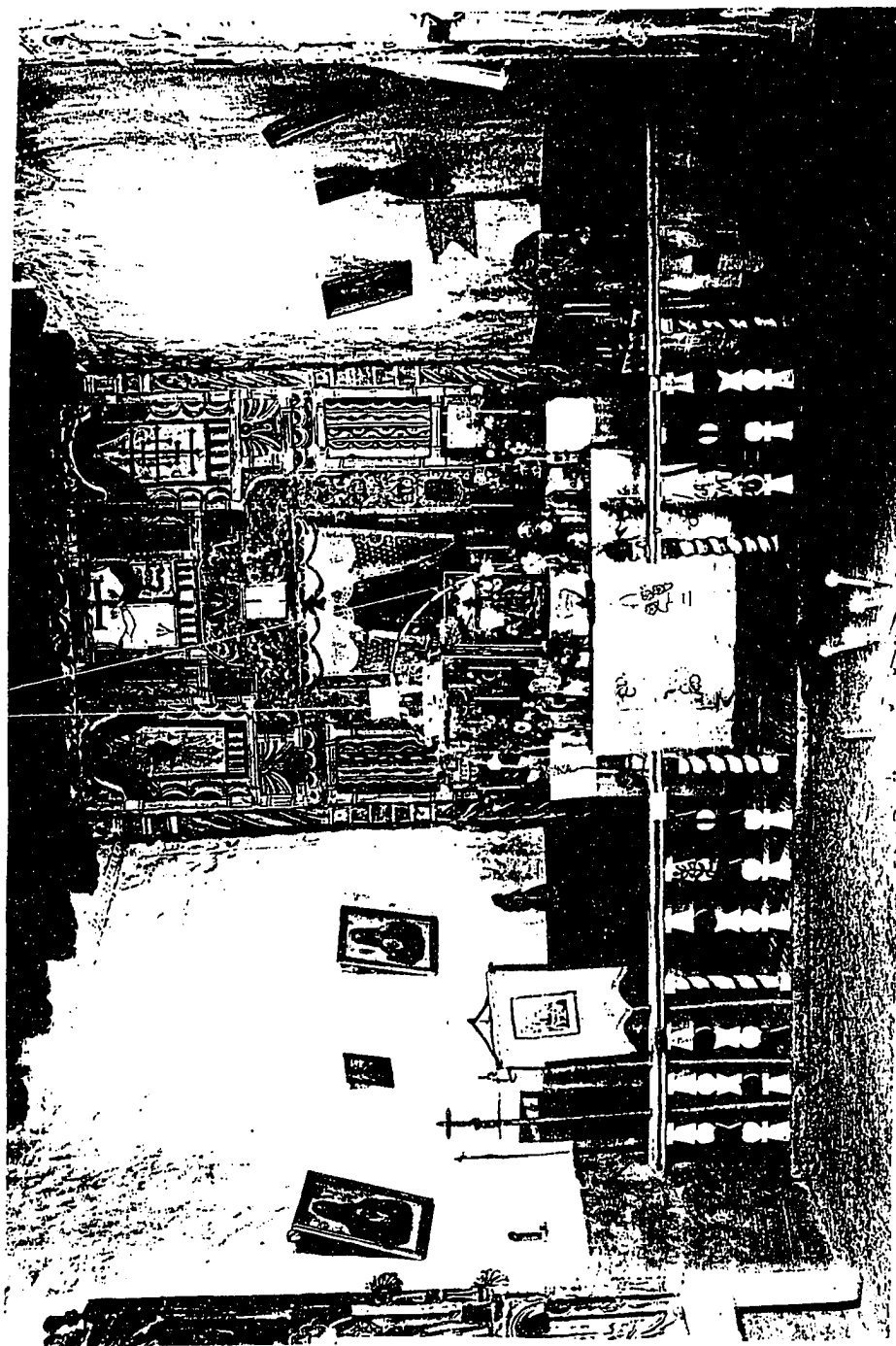


Figure 5.8 Interior of *Santuario*, 1935. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 8896.

of the Miraculous Medal (1830), Bernadette's visions of the Immaculate Conception at Lourdes (1858) and many more. All of this led to a strong revival of Marian devotions in France. It was in this "Marian Century" that the Catholic Church proclaimed the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception (1854) which declared the immaculate birth of the Virgin Mary and therefore she was free from sin. On May 14, 1874 (the Feast of the Ascension of Our Father Jesus Christ), Bishop Lamy issued a Pastoral letter in which he dedicated the Diocese of Santa Fe to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Pastoral letter was to be read from the pulpits of every church in the Diocese. Heavy emphasis was to be placed by the clergy on this devotion, urging the parishioners to take this new devotion into their hearts and establish Sacred Heart of Jesus brotherhoods.<sup>27</sup> Just as the Sacred Heart of Jesus was the celebration of the profound love of Christ for the world, the devotion to the Sacred (Immaculate) Heart of Mary reflected the belief that mankind could be united to God through Mary's heart.<sup>28</sup> Given the intense and long-held Spanish devotion to the Virgin (including the Franciscans' support of the Immaculate Conception long before it became Dogma) and the unquestioned belief in the intercession of the Virgin and patron saints, it is not

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<sup>27</sup>AASF, Loose Documents 1874, no. 9. University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

<sup>28</sup>John F. Murphy, "The Immaculate Heart," in *Mariology*, ed. Juniper B. Carol (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1961), p. 175.



surprising that this new devotion was quickly accepted in New Mexico even though it was the French clerics who introduced it.<sup>29</sup>

The Sacred Heart, having evolved from the late medieval devotion to the five wounds of Jesus and the presense of that devotion already found in New

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<sup>29</sup>There are a number of very important works which explain the history of, theology of, and nature of the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Sacred (Immaculate) Heart of Mary. Jean Bainvel, Devotions to the Sacred Heart (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1924); Lawrence A. Burke, "Our Lady in Art" in Mariology, 3 vols., ed. Juniper B. Carol (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1961), pp. 412-421; J. L. Cassidy, Mexico: Land of Mary's Wonders (Patterson, NJ: St. Anthony's Guild, 1958); Charles J. Corcoran, "Marian Confraternities," in Mariology 3 vols., ed. Juniper B. Carol (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing, Co., 1961), pp. 223-234; Raymond Corrigan, The Church and the Nineteenth Century (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1938); John B. Dalgairns, The Devotion to the Heart of Jesus (London: Richardson and Son, 1854); Ralph Gibson, A Social History of the French Catholicism 1789 - 1914 (New York: Routledge, 1989); Richard Gutzwiller, "Notes on some Official Texts of the Church's Devotions to the Sacred Heart," in Heart of the Savior: A Symposium on Devotion to the Sacred Heart ed. Josef Stierli, trans. Paul Andrews (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958), pp. 157-172; Anna Jameson, Legends of the Madonna edited and with additional notes by Estelle M. Hurlll (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1895); Joseph A. Keller, The Sacred Heart (London: R and T Washbourne, 1898); Thomas Kselman, Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983); J. McDonnell, The Litany of the Sacred Heart (London: Washbourne Ltd., 1912); J. McDonnell, The Promises of the Sacred Heart (Dublin: Irish Messenger Office, 1925); McGratty, The Sacred Heart; Murphy "The Immaculate Heart"; John F. Murphy, "Origin and Nature of Marian Cult," in Mariology 3 vols., ed. Juniper B. Carol (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1961); D. T. O'Dwyer, Our Lady in Art (Washington, D.C: n.p., 1934); Karl Rahner, "Some Theses on the Theology of the Devotion," Devotion to the Sacred Heart: A Symposium on Devotion to the Sacred Heart ed. Josef Stierli, trans. Paul Andrews (New York: Herder and Herder, 1958); Ann Tavis, The Household of Faith: Roman Catholic Devotions in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986); and Marina Warner, Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1976).

Mexico as supported by the Franciscans the Sacred Heart could easily be accepted by the New Mexicans.

Lithographs like the ones found in the *Santuario* began arriving in large numbers after 1865, but the earliest date of the lithographs in the *Santuario* cannot be ascertained. No written record exists indicating the dates of purchase. They could have been a gift from a devout visitor but no definite information exists. The earliest photographs date back only to 1911.

The architecture of the *Santuario* shows signs of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century influence. In 1910, the church architecture is New Mexican, an adobe structure with the two unadorned bell towers. (Figure 5.10)

After Abeyta's death, the *Santuario* came into the hands of his daughter, Doña Carmen. Several times she had difficulty with priests who believed the chapel should belong to the Archdiocese. According to Benjamin Reed, Father Francolón, first assigned to Santa Fe and in 1881 assigned to Santa Cruz de la Cañada, acting on the instructions of Archbishop Lamy, called on Doña Carmen to give the chapel to the church and that if this was not done no further religious services could be held in the chapel, nor would it be recognized as a church. She refused to do so. Archbishop Lamy ordered Catholic religious services in the *Santuario* discontinued and the matter ended there. Official listings by the Archdiocese of all missions from 1890 on do not record the *Santuario* as part of

the Santa Cruz parish.<sup>30</sup> While this may be true, photographs of the years following this conflict show processions to the *Santuario* (Figure 5.9).

In the fall of 1929, the property on which the *Santuario* stands was purchased from the Chavez family by a group of concerned citizens of Santa Fe and presented to Archbishop Albert T. Daeger for the Catholic church. By 1935, under archdiocesan control, the *Santuario* had towers with framed windows and peaked roofs and a roof which had been pitched. (Figure 5.11) All of this work was similar to the changes made at Santa Cruz.

Although Bishop Lamy in 1874 admonished the parishioners of the New Mexican diocese to take to their hearts the advocacy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to form brotherhoods around this advocacy there is little artistic evidence indicating compliance. In the *Santuario*, a private chapel, administered by the same priests as Santa Cruz, there is turn of the century evidence of the Sacred Heart through the lithographs. The remainder of the art in the form of locally produced *bultos*, *retablos*, ceramic statues, or banners all look to the pre-French past for its inspiration.

Earlier discussion of the acceptance and assimilation of Santo Niño and Our Lord and Savior Esquípulas into the practices and lore of the local population indicates a willingness of the New Mexican Catholics to accept or

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<sup>30</sup>Benjamin Read, "El Santuario de Chimayo," *El Palacio*, Vol III No.4 (August 1916):84; Hanks, "Not of this Earth," pp.309, 316, 324, 334.



Figure 5.9 Procession at *Santuario* in 1910. Photo by Jesse Nusbaum. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 14379.



Figure 5.10 Exterior of *Santuario* in 1935. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 8895.

reject an advocacy of Christ or Mary on its own perceived merits, with the gradual acceptance of the Sacred Heart sometime around the turn of the century as seen by the inclusion of lithographs of the two devotions.

## CHAPTER 6

### ABIQUIU

While the official Catholic Church, under the control of French clergy made some inroads into the native New Mexican churches and chapels, the most culturally conservative elements of the New Mexican population found themselves marginalized.

Members of the penitential brotherhoods whose traditions can be traced back to the penitential confraternities of Spain were finding themselves openly condemned by the new hierarchy of the Catholic church and forbidden to practice their rites in the parish churches. As a result, the brotherhoods built and furnished their own chapels. They were often located in the countryside, away from curiosity seekers.<sup>1</sup> Two *moradas* (chapels) located near the old town of

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<sup>1</sup>For detailed studies of the Brotherhoods see Wroth, Images of Penance, Images of Mercy; Woodward, The Penitentes of New Mexico; Weigle, Brothers of Light, Brothers of Blood; Stoller, A Study of 19th Century Hispanic Arts and Crafts in the American Southwest; Steele and Rivera, Penitente Self-Government; George Mills and Richard Grove, Lucifer and Crucifer: The Enigma of the Penitente (Colorado Springs: Taylor Museum, 1966); Robert B. McCoy, "Brother of Lights - the Penitentes," in The Penitentes of New Mexico ed. Carlos E. Cortés (New York: Arno Press, 1974), pp. 61-85; Horgan, Lamy of Santa Fe; Juan Hernandez, "Cactus Whips and Wooden Crosses," Journal of American Folklore 76 (1963): 216-224; Henderson, Brothers of Light: The Penitentes of the Southwest; and Alexander M. Darley, The Passionists of the Southwest or the Holy Brotherhood (Pueblo, CO: n.p., 1893).

Abiquiú illustrate the forms of celebrations and practices carried on by the brotherhoods and provide insight into the art used, maintained and commissioned by these organizations.

### **Abiquiú's History**

Abiquiú was first settled in 1740 as a buffer between Indians from the northwest and the Spanish and Pueblo villages on the Rio Grande. Some of the inhabitants were genézaros (ransomed indians) and through the eighteenth-century the town grew slowly from 733 inhabitants in 1760 to 1,363 in 1793. Only Santa Fe with a population of 2,419 and Santa Cruz with 1,650 were larger.<sup>2</sup> By 1795, Indians were less than ten percent of the population<sup>3</sup> and strongly influenced as the population was by the Franciscans, Abiquiú was a center of opposition to secularization.<sup>4</sup> Father Alcina de la Borda, the resident Franciscan clergyman in 1820, is charged with misappropriation of funds and neglecting his duties by citizens of the town. These charges justified the secularization of

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<sup>2</sup>Bancroft, History of Arizona and New Mexico, p. 279.

<sup>3</sup>AASF, Loose Documents, Mission, 1795, no.13. UNM, Albuquerque, NM.

<sup>4</sup>Secularization was the turning over of sites (missions, parishes, chapels) under the control and sustained by religious orders (in this case Franciscans) to the control of the Bishop. While the sites were under the control of religious orders they were not directly responsible to the Bishop of the diocese. This often caused strained relations. When an area came under the control of the Bishop he would send diocesan priests to a region to administer to the people. Since they did not have vows of poverty and were only maintained by the money they could raise to live on from their parishes, few priests wished to be sent to the New Mexican territory which was known to be extremely poor. Most preferred to stay in the wealthy cities of Mexico.



Abiquiú, Belén, and Taos with Father Antonio José Martínez assigned as the first secular priest in 1826.<sup>5</sup>

By the late 1820s New Mexican Catholics were taking independent action in the religious activities of the Santa Cruz region. The loss of the Franciscan fathers, a limited number of secular priests, distance from the ecclesiastical center in Durango and the harsh living conditions led to a strong system of brotherhoods. Focusing on the Passion and public penance, the New Mexican communities were living out the teachings passed on to them over generations by the Franciscan missionaries. But the Catholic church in the rest of the world was changing. The focus on outward displays of penance were gradually replaced by less physically demanding forms of repentance such as private prayer and fasting.

In 1831, Vicar Rascon gave permission to sixty members of the Third Order of St. Francis at Santa Cruz to hold Lenten exercises in Taos, provided that no "abuses" arose to be corrected on his next visit.<sup>6</sup> With the small number of secular clergy there was less daily control over the spiritual habits of the communities. The resident clergy failed to attend to the needs of the community

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<sup>5</sup>AASF, Loose Documents, Mission, 1820, nos. 12, 15, 21, 38. AASF, Loose Documents, Mission, 1826, no. 7 UNM, Albuquerque, N.M. This is the same Martínez who was excommunicated by Lamy in 1857 for his strong stands against the Bishop's changes in Catholic liturgy and his attempts to preserve Hispanic culture from perceived Anglo-American influence.

<sup>6</sup>AASF, Patents, 1831, Book LXX, Book 4, no. 25 cited in Alhborn, "Penitente Moradas of Aibquiú," p. 126, note 34.

including last Rites, funerals, weddings, saint days, and the saying of Mass and other important liturgical events. The brotherhoods often filled the gap.

In 1833, two years after Vicar Rascon gave permission for a gathering, Archbishop Zubiría ordered that "pastors of this villa. . . must never in future permit such reunion of Penitentes under any pretext whatsoever."<sup>7</sup> The Archbishop of Durango, having heard of abuses during the Holy Week celebrations, was voicing his concern over the influence of these brotherhoods and their orthodoxy. With severe public penance at the center of the Holy Week celebration the Archbishop saw them as too radical. The views of Zubiría were quite different from those of Father Domínguez who two generations earlier, in 1776, found similar observances at Santa Cruz and Abiquiú "commendable."<sup>8</sup>

It was not until the visitation of Father Niño de Guevara, 1817-1820, that Church officials found it necessary to condemn penitential activity in New Mexico.<sup>9</sup> The Catholic Church, represented by the Archbishop in Durango secularized the territory of New Mexico and denounced excessive acts of penance.

While the Brotherhoods developed separately from the Third Order of St. Francis, the first two Archbishops, Lamy and Salpointe believed they saw a

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<sup>7</sup>AASF, Patents, 1831, Book LXXII, Box 7 cited in Alhborn, "Penitente Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 129 note 35.

<sup>8</sup>Dominguez, Mission of New Mexico, p. 80.

<sup>9</sup>AASF, Accounts, Book LXII, Box 5.

relationship between the two organizations. During the second half of the nineteenth-century in an attempt to bring the Brotherhoods under the control of the new hierarchy through the institutions of the Third Orders, Lamy began approving and signing the rule books of the penitente chapters of New Mexico.<sup>10</sup> Lamy signed the penitente rule book of Abiquiú entitled, Arreglo de la Santa Hermandad de la Sangre de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo (Rule of the Sacred Brotherhood of the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ) in 1856.<sup>11</sup>

The Brotherhoods were becoming an embarrassment to the hierarchy and American newcomers in the region supported the hierarchy's suppression of the Brotherhoods. In 1857 there is evidence that Bishop Lamy had approved a set of rules to be used by penitente brotherhoods which included regulation of the *Confraternity* (my italics) by the priests and prelate [Lamy], the defining of responsibilities of the officers and the rights and duties of the members. Later,

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<sup>10</sup> Similarities seen between the brotherhoods and the Third Order of St. Francis focused on the emphasis placed upon the Passion, repentance and an open display of penance. J.B. Salpointe in his history of the Catholic Church, Soldiers of the Cross, also voices the belief that the brotherhoods came from the Franciscan tertiaries. Approved rules are recorded for the *Santuario*, Cochiti, chapters at Chimayo, El Rito and Taos. Examples of Rules approved by Lamy can be found AASF, Loose Documents, Diocesan, 1853, no. 17; 1856, no. 11. UNM, Albuquerque, NM.

<sup>11</sup>A copy signed by Abiquiú's priest, Don Pedro Bernal in 1867 is found AASF, Loose Documents, Diocesan, 1856, no. 12. UNM, Albuquerque, NM.

Lamy issued other rules governing the Penitentes which included the proper form of penance.<sup>12</sup>

By 1879 in his Lenten Pastoral letter, Archbishop Lamy condemned "los Penitentes" in strong terms and in his 1885 Lenten Pastoral letter Lamy includes a paragraph which prompted by a papal encyclical of 1884 cautioning against secret societies.<sup>13</sup> For Lamy, obedience to the church was paramount. He found the undirected and rigorous penances "blasphemous" behavior. Lamy's greatest concern seems to be any threat to Church authority in organizational or doctrinal matters. This is seen not only in his reactions to the brotherhoods but his moves against Doña Carmen at Chimayo and the excommunication of Father Martínez in Taos. Assuring internal ecclesiastical order and financial support, as well as, presenting a good image for the civil authorities (most of which were Protestants) was of paramount importance. This was to be the attitude of the rest of the French Archbishops through the rest of the century.<sup>14</sup>

The New Mexican heralded Archbishop Salpointe's "Strong and effective" measure for the "suppression" of the order known as Penitentes. The paper

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<sup>12</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, p. 54.

<sup>13</sup>AASF, Loose Documents 1879, #1; 1885 #20, UNM, Albuquerque, N.M.

<sup>14</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, pp. 53-68.

noted, "The action of the Catholic church authorities must meet with the hearty approval of all right minded people, no matter what their religious opinion."<sup>15</sup>

After the Civil War, in a notorious episode, the U.S. Army had forcibly driven the Navajos to Bosque Redondo (a reservation) and by 1883 had also driven the Utes north. With Indian threats gone, the primary reason for the town of Abiquiú vanished and so did the population. By 1870, the population of Abiquiú was only 800. The remaining citizens of the town, increasingly isolated, withdrew into the penitente Brotherhoods which helped them maintain their cultural identity.<sup>16</sup>

### Religious Art of the Abiquiú Moradas

Two *moradas* exist in Abiquiú.<sup>17</sup> They are identified by their locations, East and South. The plans of the *moradas* show identical arrangements of interior space. They have three rooms each with the longest on the west end with a contracted sanctuary space, acting as an oratory; a center room serving as

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<sup>15</sup>New Mexican 11 March 1892.

<sup>16</sup>Richard E. Ahlborn, "The Penitente Moradas of Abiquiú," Contributions from the Museum of History and Technology Paper 63 (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968), p. 129.

<sup>17</sup>In 1967, Richard E. Ahlborn was allowed by the Abiquiú Brotherhood to photograph, take measurements of and record all of the items found in their *moradas*. This study was the first of its kind and is central to any discussion of the art in penitente chapels. Because of their desire for privacy, the brotherhoods discourage (and still discourage) investigations from outsiders and accurate information is difficult to attain. Dr. Ahlborn's work came before much of the looting of *moradas* by collectors in the 1970s and therefore has been quite useful in documenting the art of the brotherhood of this town.

a sacristy and a room on the east end for storage. The only difference in the two *moradas* was in size, with the East larger than the South (Figure 6.30).<sup>18</sup>

Along the walls of the west room of the East *morada* were religious prints in tin frames (Figure 6.1). The print on the left is a Mexican copperplate engraving of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the print in the center is an 1847 Currier, hand-colored lithograph of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On the right is a mid-nineteenth-century lithograph of Pope St. Gregory.<sup>19</sup> A small figure of the Holy Child of Atocha (Santo Niño de Atocha) and the tin niche in which he was encased were locally produced.(Figure 6.2) Tin work became a minor art form after the arrival of the American army with its supply of tin cans. When the cans were thrown away, the New Mexicans would take them and rework them into frames. Designs seen on New Mexican tin frames included twisted columns, crests, scallops, and wings.<sup>20</sup>

Every *morada* contained either an image of the Angel of Death, Doña Sebastiana or a model of the Death Cart.<sup>21</sup> These images or models were only

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<sup>18</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 136.

<sup>19</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 154.

<sup>20</sup>Ahlborn, "Penitente Moradas of Abiquiú," pp. 137-138. For more on the tin work See E. Boyd, Saints and Saint Makers (Santa Fe, n.p., 1946), pp. 126-32; E. Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 295-301.

<sup>21</sup>The New Mexican death carts have several possible origins. Louise Stark's research into the origin of the New Mexican Death Cart has brought to light several possible sources. Some scholars maintain that the stories of the Triumph of Death found in late Medieval and Renaissance literature and painting could

found in the *moradas*. By the nineteenth century such images were no longer part of the official Catholic celebrations in New Mexico. The Abiquiú East *morada* has La Doña Sebastiana rather than the cart. This figure is not a *santo* but an allegorical representation of death as a skeletal woman, armed with a hatchet, a club, or most often with a bow and arrow, and sometimes riding in a cart. Doña Sebastiana is not a saint from whom the petitioner requests assistance. She is meant to remind the viewer to avoid a "bad death" (in the state of mortal sin) and to always be prepared to die a "good death."

The death carts, like much of the artistic subjects and styles found in New Mexico, originated in Spain as part of the Good Friday processions devoted to the Entombment of Christ which began during the sixteenth-century and continue to the present. At the head of the procession there was usually a *paso* (religious float) showing Death, as a skeleton, seated beneath a Cross (Figure 6.3). In the nineteenth-century such a *paso* from Seville was described as:

a kind of allegory, for on a flat platform. . . there is a mountain upon which sits the Holy Cross, and on its arms are the ladders. At the foot of the Cross there is a figure of death as a human skeleton, seated on the world, humble and dejected, the right hand on the cheek, and the left

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have been the source. If the cart came from the European view of the "Triumph of Death" as found in literature and paintings of this subject, then there should be some traces of either the literature or paintings in the region. There are none. It must also be remembered that few of the inhabitants of New Mexico were literate. The second possibility is that the Death Cart (*la Carreta de la Muerta*) was a remnant from an old religious play, but while there were religious plays performed in New Mexico during the colonial period, there is no evidence that the death cart was ever in any of them.

holding the scythe. From the arms of the Cross falls a black streamer which has on it in gold letters the motto 'Mors, Mortem Superavit.'<sup>22</sup>

In Seville, Death was seen as having been conquered by the death of Christ. The Confraternity that was most famous for its use of the figures of Death was the Confraternity of the Entombed Christ in Seville.<sup>23</sup> The Holy Week processions were brought to the New World by the Spanish.

The Dominican chronicler Dávila Padilla in his Historia de la Fundación written in 1634, describes a procession of the Confraternity of the Entombed Christ performed in Mexico City. A cart "covered with mourning [draperies]" replaced the float. Death, kneeling at the foot of a cross, had Latin inscriptions hanging from its arms which read, "Death, Where is Your Victory," and "Death, I will be your death." (Figure 6.4)<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Felix Gonzáles de León, Historia crítica y description de las cofradías de Sevilla (Sevilla, n.p., 1852), p. 189. Quoted in Louise B. Stark, "The Origin of the Penitente 'Death Cart,'" Journal of American Folklore 84 (1971): 308.

<sup>23</sup>Although today bodily penance is no longer practiced in Seville, there are brothers called Penitentes who march in the Holy Week processions. The two groups are known as the Brothers of the Blood of Christ and the Brothers of Light. In the Good Friday processions they carry a *paso* of Death long with those of the Entombed Christ and Our Lady of Sorrows.

<sup>24</sup>Fray Agustín Dávila Padilla, Historia de la Fundación y Discurso de la Provincia de Santiago de México, de la Orden de Predicadores, por las Vidas de sus Varones Insignes y Casas Notables de Nueva España Libro Segundo (Belgium, 1634), p. 566 quoted in Stark, "Origins of Death Cart," p. 309.



In Spain the float with Death began the procession. It was carried by the faithful (often the Brothers of Light) and was part of the whole celebration, providing an allegory of the conquering of death by Christ's death and resurrection. In Mexico, the death cart, which replaced the float, led the procession but was no longer attended to by the faithful. Floats representing the Entombed Christ and Our Lady of Sorrows continued to be part of the Mexico City procession, along with 1,000 Brothers of Blood. By the time the death cart appears in New Mexico several more changes had occurred. A penitent pulled the cart and the allegorical triumph of Christ defeating Death was now being acted out by the penitent as a literal interpretation of man's struggle against Death. Small platforms with the Entombed Christ and Our Lady of Sorrows were still carried in processions by members of the community.<sup>25</sup>

With the loss of the clergy by the first quarter of the nineteenth-century, the people left in New Mexico were forced to fend for themselves. Without clergy to perform the last rites and give absolution, a kind of self-absolution was developed in the form of corporal punishment as penance. This form of penance was not unknown to the confraternal system. It was practiced for years under the guidance of the Church. But under these unique conditions the practices became more intense and dominated the Good Friday processions. As Stark notes, ". . . the procession, which had originally consisted of a combination of paso figures

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<sup>25</sup>Stark, "Origins of Penitente Death Cart," pp. 309-310.



Figure 6.1 Chromolithographs in tin frames. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-21.



Figure 6.2 Holy Child of Atocha in tin niche. Photo by Richard Alhborn.  
Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-20.

and penitential participants similar to their Spanish forerunners, became solely penitential with the paso figures, in some cases, transformed into a means of penance."<sup>26</sup>

In 1920, Laurence F. Lee, reported on a penitent acting out Stark's observations:

A brother is reported to have carried this figure [Our Lady of Sorrows] above his head, with his arms raised. Should the brother at any time lower his arms, the blade of two long knives which were inserted at the base of the figure and rested along each side of his body would enter his flesh.<sup>27</sup>

There are both verified and unverified accounts of severe penance conducted by the Brotherhoods as recorded by Laurence Lee which are not found in the reports of the procession with Death in Spain or in Mexico City. However, the existence of the Confraternities, the subjects of the processional art and the existence of the Death figures in all three areas would strongly indicate a link between the allegorical Death figures of Spain and Mexico and the more literal use of Death for penance in New Mexico.

Two types of Death carts were used in nineteenth-century New Mexican processions. The first was common to the Sangre de Cristo mountains of New Mexico, and the other was found in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. The style found in the Sangre de Cristo mountains consists of skeletons around

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<sup>26</sup>Stark, "Origins of the Death Cart," p. 310.

<sup>27</sup>Laurence F. Lee, "Los Hermanos Penitentes," El Palacio 8:1 (January 1920), p. 10.

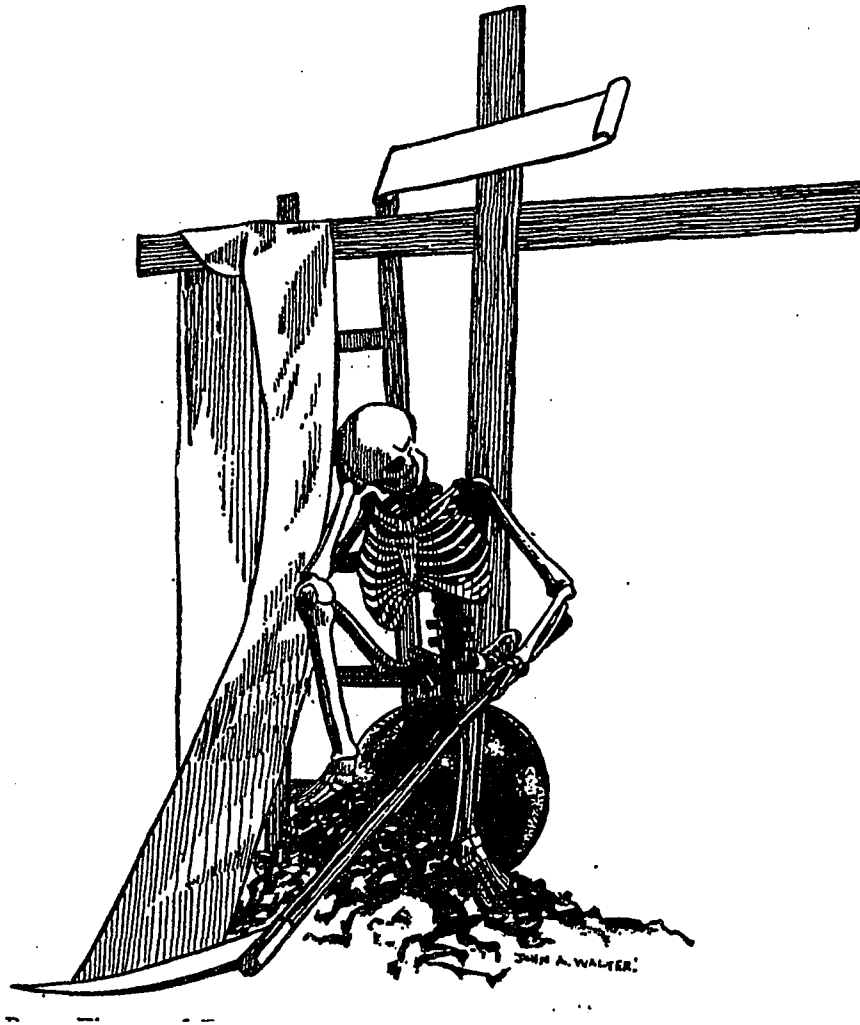


Figure 6.3 Paso Figure of Death, Confraternity of the Entombed Christ, Seville. Seventeenth Century. Drawing by Selma Margaretten based on photograph. In Stark, "Origin of Death Cart," p. 308.

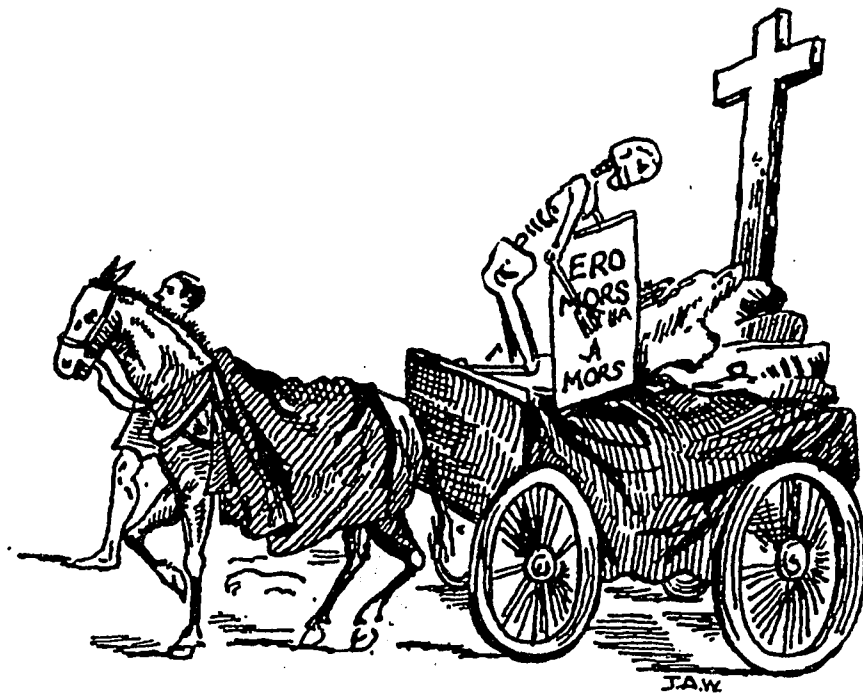


Figure 6.4 Dath Cart for Good Friday Procession, Mexico City, Sixteenth Century. Based on an engraving in Luis González Obregón, Mexico Viejo, 9th edition (Mexico, 1966), p. 462. In Stark, "Origin of the Death Cart," p. 309.

thirty-six inches in height, usually sitting or kneeling, holding a bow and arrow. They were carved of wood and covered with a light coat of gesso. With few exceptions, they were left unpainted and generally were dressed in black robes with hoods that covered the head. The hands of the skeletons were generally large and the heads were very small. Gray and white horsehair was often attached to the crown of the head with animal glue, arranged around a bald spot, with the hair braided at the back of the neck. Usually, the eye sockets were left empty (although sometimes they held obsidian eyes), and the mouth was always in a grimace with wood or bone teeth showing. These skeletons showed a great amount of anatomical detail, including the ribs and the swelling at the limb joints, though the rib numbers were inaccurate and the limbs were out of proportion (Figures 6.5, 6.6, 6.7).

The San Luis Valley style of Death cart (which was called *La Muerta*) developed later than its counterpart in the Sangre de Cristo mountains. The skeletons were about the same size but they were always crouched in the cart, holding a bow and arrow. Unlike the detailed carving of the Sangre de Cristo skeletons, only the hands, feet, and heads of the San Luis figures were carved. The rest was a block of wood. In this figure the head was larger in proportion to the rest of the body with all of the extremities gessoed and painted with a white housepaint. The eyes were painted black and covered with window glass. The

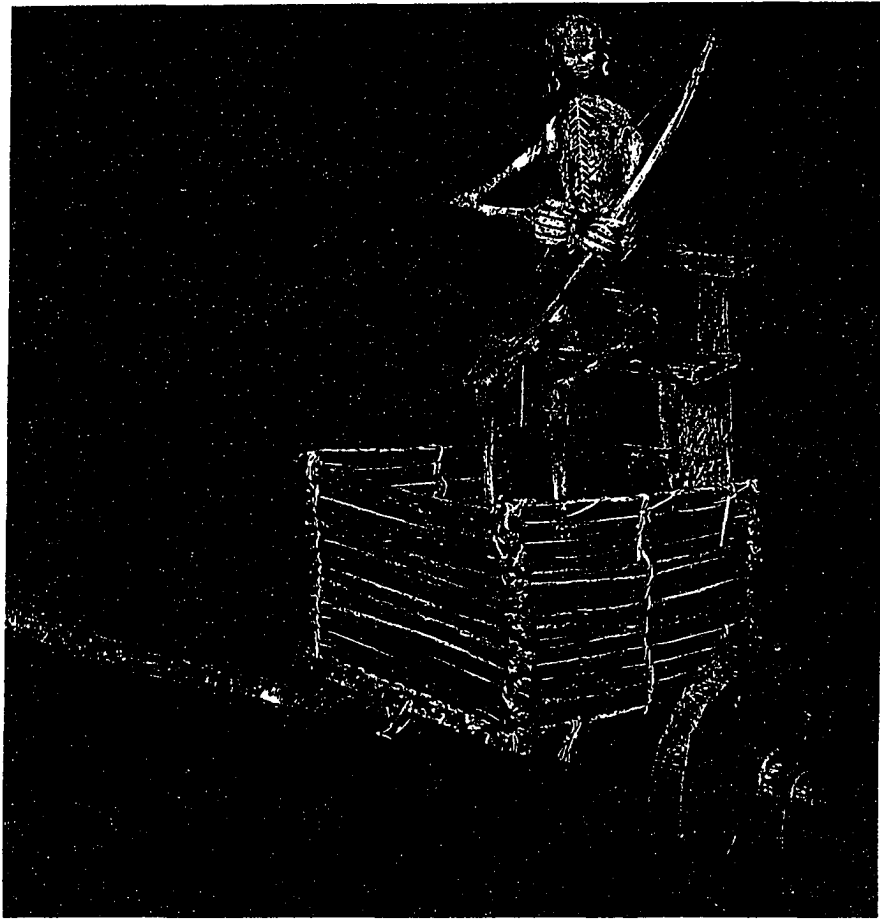


Figure 6.5 Death Cart in Sangre de Cristo style. Cottonwood, gesso and leather. This cart is from the village of Córdova, New Mexico. According to an oral report, it was made by the grandfather of José Lopez. José Lopez died in 1938 at the approximate age of sixty, and so the art was probably built in the middle of the nineteenth-century. Lopez and his father were carpenters by trade, and probably the grandfather was also. The cart shows a high degree of craftsmanship. Only wooden pegs and thongs of hide were used to join the pieces. The carved ribs, the large hands, small head, out of proportion limbs, grimacing smile, empty eyes and the long gray braid down the back of the head of this skeleton are all characteristics of the Sangre de Cristo style. Stark, "Origins of the Death Cart," pp. 305-307. Courtesy of Taylor Museum of Colorado Springs, CO, Neg. No. TM521.



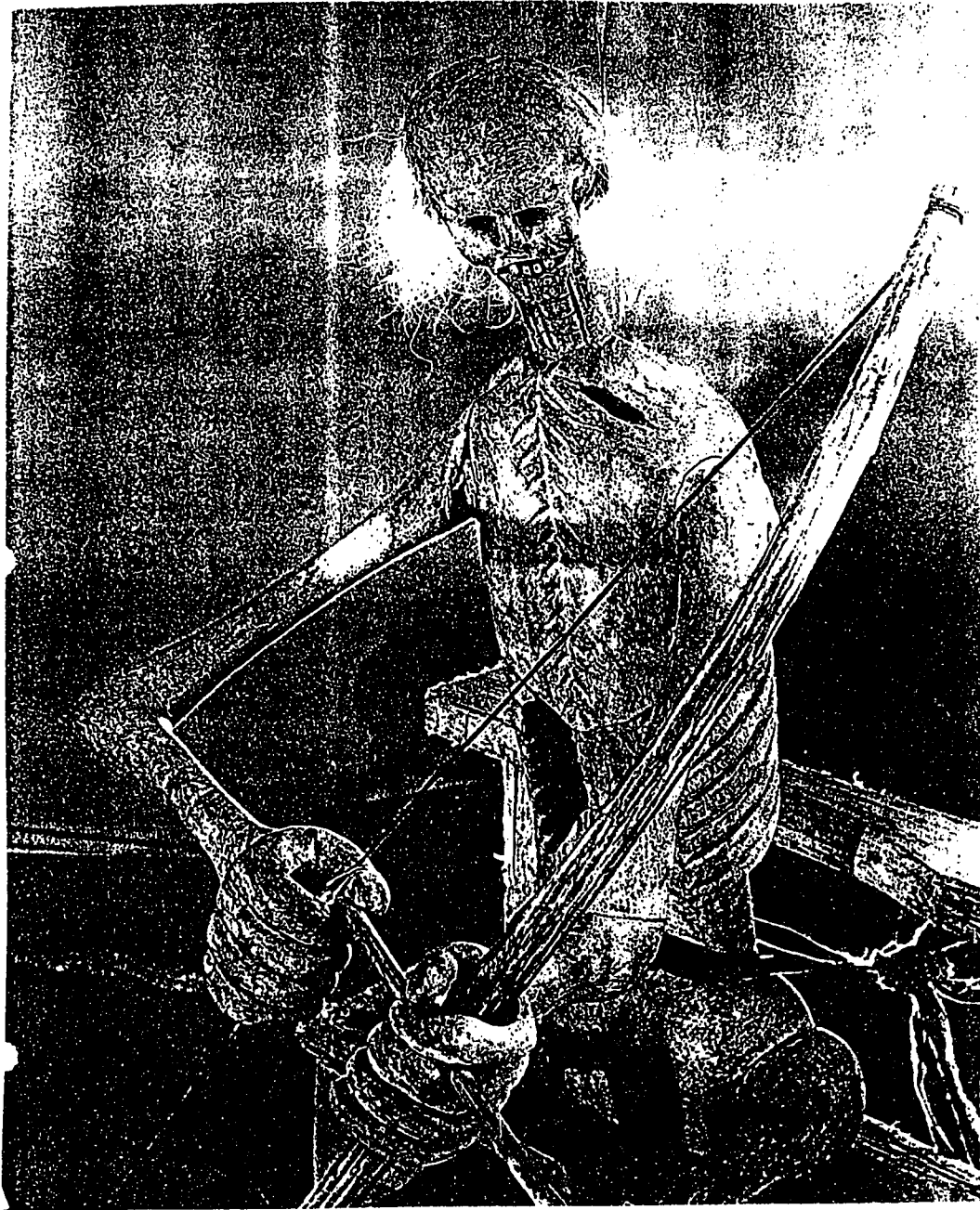
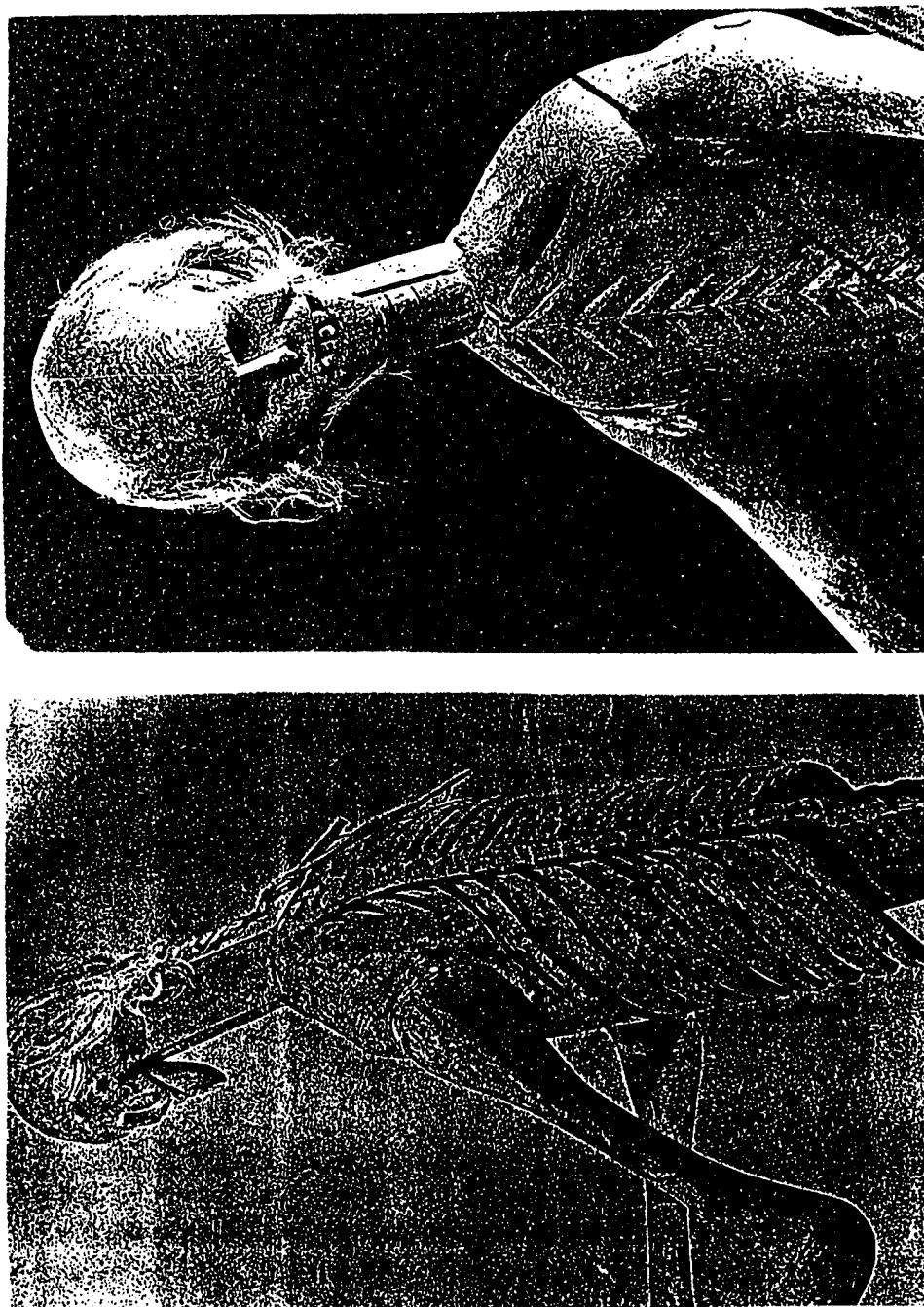


Figure 6.6 Detail of Death Cart in Figure 6.5. In Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, Plate 31.



Figures 6.7 Details of Death Cart. In Wilder and Breitenbach, Santos, Plate 32.

nose was usually long and broad with an open mouth showing teeth of bone or wood. The hood was attached to a black or brown robe which covered the figure and was cinched at the waist by a rope or chain. This *morada* in Abiquiú has an example of the San Luis Valley Death figure (Figure 6.8). Ahlborn states that *La Doña Sebastiana*<sup>28</sup> was located in the back of the oratory of the East *morada*. The santero is unknown but the figure exhibits most of the characteristics of the San Luis style.<sup>29</sup> *La Muerta* is 76.2 centimeters tall, made of whitewashed wood with glass eyes, wood teeth and is dressed in black fabric with white lace and holds a bow and arrow.

Representations of Death, while found in every *morada*, were outnumbered by the representatives of hope. Hope was found in the representations of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints who acted as intercessors for man. The art on the Altar of the East *morada* illustrates this hope (Figure 6.9). The central figure is the Crucified Christ with an angel,

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<sup>28</sup>In New Mexico, the figure of Death was called by several names: *La Muerta*, *Nuestra Comadre Sebastiana* (Our Comrade Sebastiana) or *Doña Sebastiana*. Death was treated as a female (often seen in Spain) and *muerte* is a feminine noun. In New Mexico, *Comadre* is a term generally used to express kinship between mother and godmother. Sebastiana is probably a iconographical error. In religious art, St. Sebastian is painted naked and full of arrows. Over time I believe it was confused with the naked skeleton holding the bow and arrow both dealing with death. Stark, "Origins of the Death Cart," pp. 304-05; Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 138.

<sup>29</sup>Stark, "Origins of the Death Cart," pp. 305-306; Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," pp. 138, 155; Henderson, *Brothers of Light*, p. 32; E. Boyd, *Popular Arts*, pp. 462-464; and Frank, *Kingdom of the Saints*, p. 297.

measuring 139.7 centimeters, it is carved wood, gessoed and painted with overpainting in oils. Included on the crucifix is a crown of thorns, a rosary and the angel(Figure 6.10).<sup>30</sup> Three other crucifixes are also found (Appendix: Abiquiú 1, 2, 3). All of these crucifixes were locally produced and date from the second half of the nineteenth-century. These are also carved wood, gessoed and painted with each having a rosary and white cotton skirts.<sup>31</sup> The figures were highly stylized with intense colors of red for the blood found a large amounts on the elongated body of Christ. This was particularly true of santero work after 1850. Religious art produced for the *moradas* was not produced with beauty as its goal. It was designed to portray the raw power of Christ as seen in His suffering on the Cross and as Jesús Nazareno (Jesus the Nazarene). Earlier santero work when compared to late nineteenth-century penitente art had a clean simplicity which was lacking in the later works which, by the turn of the century, gave way to real hair and teeth, porcelain eyes, and all of the paraphernalia of public suffering.

Compared to the French art found in Santa Fe, Penitential art is expressive and active. The Saint Sulpice art of the Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe includes

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<sup>30</sup> In early Christian art, an angel was often used to hold a chalice below the wound in Christ's chest to catch the blood from the wound created by the spear in the side.

<sup>31</sup>On the importance of Christ crucified in santero art see E. Boyd, "Crucifix in Santero Art," El Palacio LX #3 (March 1953): 112-115.

plaster of paris statues of the Virgin and St. Joseph with the Christ child, each is passive in expression, wrapped in garments negating their sexuality. The altar includes a very small crucifix with most references to the Passion presented in symbols as seen in the tiles of the Pelican plucking open her own breast to feed her young with her blood, as the representation of the redeeming Christ, and the lamb with the banner of victory as the resurrected Christ. While both cultures turn to Christ for hope and redemption. the nineteenth-century French church had abandoned most of the outward demonstrations of penance and the late Medieval and Renaissance emphasis on public penance. The penitentes of New Mexico had maintained the processions, the scouraging and physical penance which had once been sanctioned by the Catholic church. Their art reflected the pain and agony Christ suffered to give mankind hope and redemption and that sacrifice was not to be forgotten. The sanitizing of the Passion removed the elements most important to Penitente sensibilities.

Art historians have identified a number of the pieces in the Abiquiú moradas as the work of one man, a santero known only as "the Abiquiú santero." Very seldom did a santero sign his works. Today many of the santeros are known only by their styles, or the locations of their works. Exceptions like Molleno, and the two Aragons are rare.

The *bultos* produced by the Penitente santeros were large and theatrical. They were needed to enact the drama of the Passion in the *moradas*. The



Figure 6.8 Death (*La Muerta*) as found in the East *morada*. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-19.

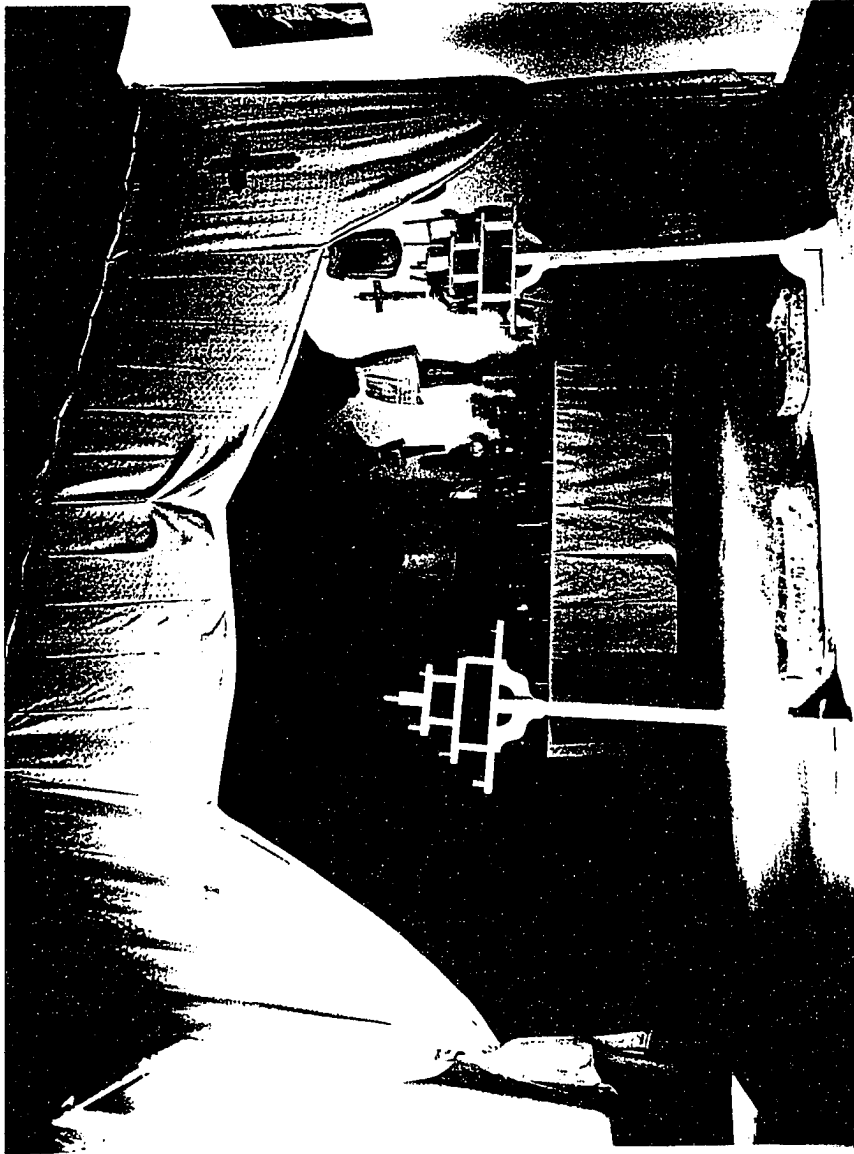


Figure 6.9 Interior of East *morada*. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-2.



Figure 6.10 Crucified Christ with angel. Center location on altar. East *morada*. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-5.



santeros who had been producing religious art for the regular population began creating works for the Brotherhoods. This was increasingly true during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Abiquiú santero's style was similar to other Penitente *bulto* santeros. He created figures with excessive amounts of painted blood, especially as the century came to a close. The chest wound was always exaggerated, splotches of blood were emphasized, and sometimes there were areas that appeared "bruised." Larry Frank sees this as a reflection of the Mexican Baroque style on the late nineteenth-century santeros of New Mexico. The figures often had long curly hair and tangled beards created by the build up of gesso on the faces of the *bultos*. Most, if not all, had articulated ribs and a separately delineated stomach. The face had high cheek bones and the mouth was open. The early crucifixes by the Abiquiú santero had darker and finely drawn lines of blood with the later crucifixes painted in brighter red and the wounds and blood more dramatically shown.<sup>32</sup>

Another santero known as the "Master of Penitente Cristos" also produced works found in the *moradas* at Truchas and Abiquiú. He paid great attention to detail, carving fingers and toes and carving teeth in the open mouth of Christ (Figures 6.11, 6.12).

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<sup>32</sup>Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 265.

Another portrayal of Christ of great importance to the Brotherhoods was Jesus as *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Our Father Jesus the Nazarene) ( Figure 6.13). This was the Christ who was tried before the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, scourged, given a crown of thorns, and forced to carry his cross to Calvary. He was the Jesus to be imitated during the penance of Holy Week.<sup>33</sup> The *Jesus Nazareno* found in the East *morada* was carved by Rafael Aragon.<sup>34</sup> This bulto is dressed in a red fabric gown, has a horsehair wig, holds a palm cluster and rosaries, has a leather crown of thorns on his head, and the platform has a brightly painted border. This bulto was described by Alice Corbin Henderson in her work, Brothers of Light: The Penitentes of the Southwest, from her observations of the Holy Week processions at Abiquiú in 1918:

red gown, blindfolded, flowing black hair. . . red gown, bound hands, made for mission. . . tall, almost life size, blindfolded. . . . carried on [a] small platform in [a] procession from the lower [east] morada.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to all of the representations of Christ, there are two *bultos* of the Virgin. They both portray Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows, the advocacy of the mother of Jesus having lost her son. Of carved wood, gessoed and painted, dressed in a pink cotton gown and veil, Our Lady of Sorrows has a tin crown and metal dagger, artificial flowers and rosaries (Figure 6.14). The second

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<sup>33</sup>For a detailed look at the iconography of Jesus the Nazarene (*Ecce Homo*) see Schiller, Iconography of Christian Art: The Passion of Jesus Christ.

<sup>34</sup>Ahlborn, "Penitente Moradas in Abiquiú," p. 159.

<sup>35</sup>Henderson, Brothers of Light, pp. 13, 26, 43-46.

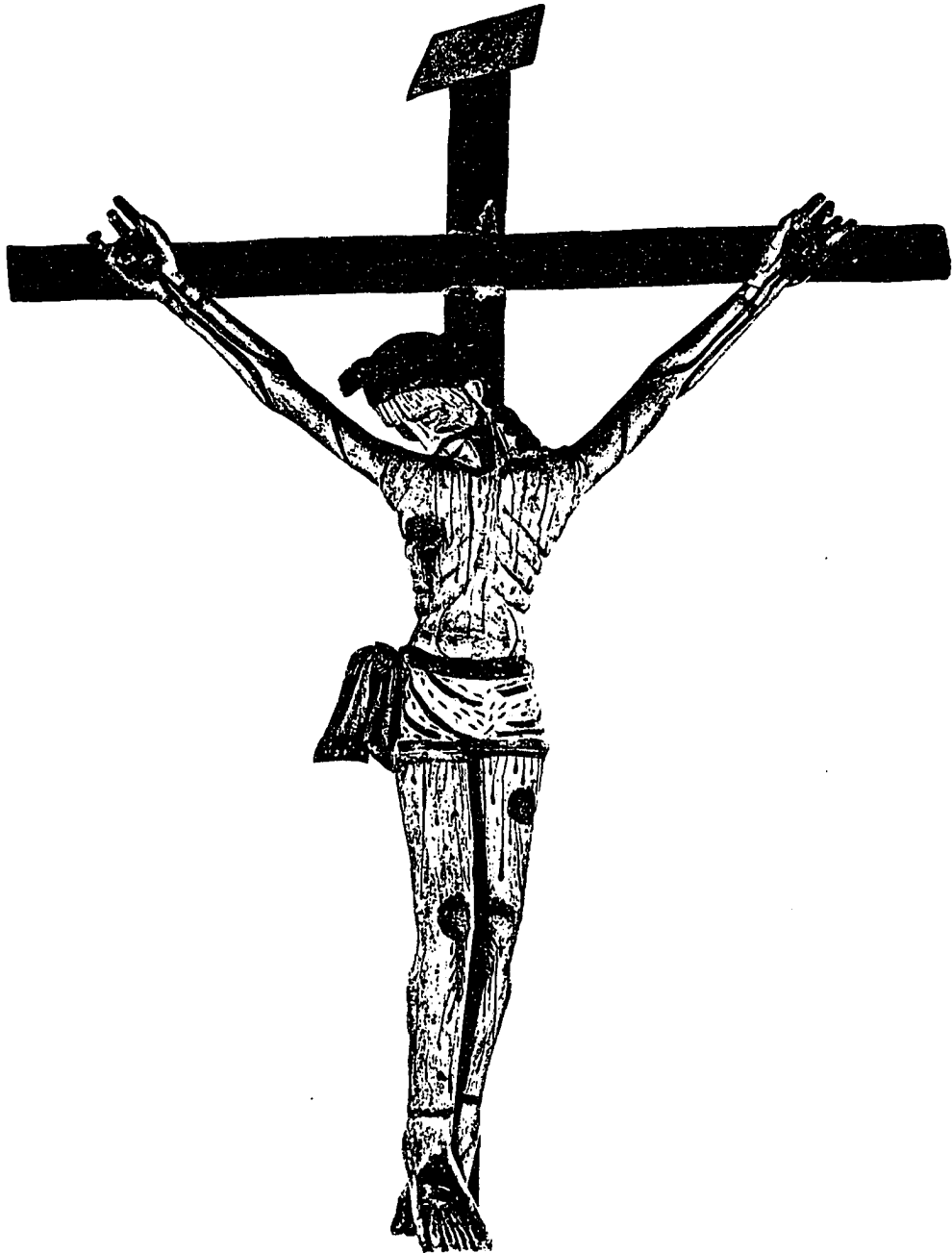


Figure 6.11 Crucifix by "Master of Penitente Cristos." This figure highlights the unique features found in the santero art created for the *moradas*. Photo in Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 268.



Figure 6.12 Detail of face of Crucifix in Figure 6.11 by the "Master of Penitente Cristos." In Frank, Kingdom of the Saints, p. 269.



Figure 6.13 *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Our Father Jesus the Nazarene) by Rafael Aragon (active 1829-1855). Photo by Richard Alhborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institute, No neg No.

Virgin, while identified as Our Lady of Sorrows by the members of the Brotherhood, when questioned by Ahlborn, also admitted she could be identified as Our Lady of Solitude (Figure 6.15). She has carved wooden hands and head which are gessoed and painted. The body is gesso-wetted cloth, draped on a stick frame to dry and then painted. This particular *bulto* is in a black satin habit with a white lace border. She has a tin halo, rosary, and artificial flowers.<sup>36</sup> The crowns are part of her identification as the mother of Christ, and the rosaries reinforce her identification.

True to sixteenth-and seventeenth-century Spanish traditions, the Penitentes continued to focus on the Passion of Christ. A good Catholic is required to do penance to receive absolution and receive the sacraments. Without many priests this was most often done during Holy Week when the priests came to hold services. Suffering is part of penance, penance leads to redemption. Therefore, the instruments used to focus on the Passion and penance, the art, reflected the themes of death, the Crucifixion, the pain of the loss of a loved one and mankind's need to act out its form of penance imitating Christ during his last week on earth as a man. Repent, and do severe penance, and redemption

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<sup>36</sup>Ahlborn, "Penitente Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 159. Usually, Our Lady of Sorrows is portrayed with a dagger in her heart. For a more detailed account of the process of making bultos with hollow shirts see E. Boyd, "New Mexico Bultos with Hollow Skirts: How They Were Made," *El Palacio* LVIII #5 (May 1951): 145-148. Generally, the depiction of Mary as Our Lady of Solitude is in a habit, as a nun. This goes back to the belief that Mary went into mourning and lived in solitude after the death of her son.

guarantees a "good death," not the "bad death" in mortal sin forwarned by Doña Sebastiana.

There are several male saints found in the East *morada*. First, there are St. Peter with a rooster and St. John the Evangelist (Figures 6.16, 6.17). St. Peter was the apostle who denied Jesus three times before the cock crowed and announced the dawn of the day of the Crucifixion. According to Ahlborn, "The bulto of San Pedro has special meaning for penitentes who, through their penance, bear witness to 'Jesus the Nazarene.'"<sup>37</sup> St. John the Evangelist is in the *morada* recalling John's presence with the Virgin at the foot of the cross. St. Peter's head is carved, gessoed, and painted. The body is made of cloth dipped in gesso and draped over sticks, in much the same style of Our Lady of Sorrows. St. John the Evangelist was carved from wood, gessoed, and painted. He has a black horsehair wig and is dressed in white cotton fabric with palm clusters and a rosary.<sup>38</sup> Henderson places these two male bultos in the mission of Santo Tomás before 1919. Jose Espinoza states that the two pieces "were removed [from Santo Tomás] to one of the local moradas . . . when the old church was torn down." and were still there in 1967 when Ahlborn took his photographs.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 139.

<sup>38</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 160.

<sup>39</sup>Henderson, Brothers of Light, p. 26; Jose Espinoza, Saints in the Valley: Christian sacred Images in the history, life, and folk art of Spanish New Mexico (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1960), p. 75.



Figure 6.14 Our Lady of Sorrows. Early twentieth-century. Unidentified santero.  
Photo by Richard Alhborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No.  
M2-13.





Figure 6.15 Our Lady of Sorrows, second half of nineteenth-century.  
Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian  
Institution, Neg. No. M2-17.

The second, and final set of bultos found in the East *morada* portray two saints. The first is of St. Anthony of Padua with the infant Jesus (Figure 6.18). Like many of the *bultos* in the *morada* it was made in New Mexico in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is of carved wood, gessoed, and painted with indications that it has a repainted head. It is dressed in a dark blue habit with artificial flowers.<sup>40</sup>

The final *bulto* is of St. John of Nepomuk (Figure 6.19). He is also of wood, gessoed and painted. He is dressed in a black hat and robe under a white alb-like coat and he is holding a rosary. St. John of Nepomuk, while not Spanish was represented in a number of New Mexican religious sites. He is the protector of secrecy and privacy, having been martyred for maintaining the sanctity of the confessional. The secrecy preserved and devotion to vows taken were valued by the penitentes.<sup>41</sup>

On the lower step of the altar Ahlborn found lots of small commercial products, "mostly crucifixes, in plaster, plastic and cheap metal alloys as well as numerous glass cups for candles."<sup>42</sup> The brothers were not opposed to "new"

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<sup>40</sup>St. Anthony has the dark blue habit representing the traditional Spanish Franciscan habits of New Mexico before 1890. Dominguez, *Missions*, p. 264, note 59.

<sup>41</sup>There is a question as to the subject of this bulto. E. Boyd has written that she believes it might have originally been painted as St. Francis or St. Joseph. She notes a bulto very similar in style of St. Joseph and of the same period in the Colorado Springs collection. See Wilder and Breitenbach, *Santos*, Plate 42.

<sup>42</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 138.

products. Their purchase of crucifixes of plaster and plastic indicate to accept change in form, not in subject.

In the Sacristy of the East *morada*, Ahlborn found a wooden chest which held cooking and heating utensils, two fireplaces, benches along the walls, and snare drums mounted on top of a truncated wicker basket.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, the storage room of the East *morada* contained a wood and tin lined tub plastered with adobe, commercially made lamps, a processional cross with two small metal faces and small cast corpus, two percussion rifles<sup>44</sup>, wooden rattles, heavy crosses, a large bell, the *morada* death cart, a plank ladder, and an oil drum stove.

On each Maundy Thursday, the brothers gathered to perform a tenebrae service. The lamp lights were lowered, the wooden rattles, shaken to symbolize the quaking and shattering earth following the death of Christ, sounded. The drums were used on Good Friday to mark cadence for penitentes as they dragged the heavy crosses to a hill designated Calvary. The processional cross would hold an articulated body of Christ and the death cart was pulled by a penitente to fulfill his vow of penance.

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<sup>43</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 137. Domínguez notes in 1776 the presence of rifles and drums in the mission choir lofts. Domínguez, *Missions*, pp. 107, 131 Note #4, 167.

<sup>44</sup>Ahlborn requested identification of these rifles from Craddock Goins, Department of Forces History, Smithsonian Institute, and was informed the rifles were common Indian trade objects. They were probably imports for sale to the Utes. Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 136.



Figure 6.16 St. Peter and cock *bulto*. First quarter of nineteenth-century.  
Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian  
Institution, Neg. No. M2-11.



Figure 6.17 St. John the Evangelist. Second half of the nineteenth century.  
"Abiquiú santero." Photo by Richard Alborn. Courtesy Smithsonian  
Institution, No Neg. No.

The second Abiquiú *morada*, the South *morada* seems to have been built at a later date. Like the East *morada* it contains three rooms: Oratory, Sacristy and storage room. The walls of the oratory are lined with benches (Figure 6.20). On those walls are religious prints in frames made of commercial plaster or local tinwork (Figure 6.20). Of the two examples, the larger is of St. Joseph and the Christ child. The frame is of molded plaster which was then gilded and the picture is a chromolithograph on paper. The smaller is of St. Peter, and it also is a commercially made chromolithograph print; however, the frame is a New Mexican tin frame, one cut, repoussé,<sup>45</sup> stamped and soldered (Figure 6.21). (Similar works were found in the East *morada*.) Both date from the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to other works found on the walls of this *morada*, the tin niche with the woodcut of the Christ Child was produced in New Mexico. The niche has six glass panels painted with wavy lines (Appendix: Abiquiú). The use of glass for this kind of project and the use of tin date the piece after American occupation, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The cross also dates from the second half of the nineteenth century. The tin work, punched with the pomegranate designed ends and corner fillers, reflect the Moorish influence on Spanish art (artistically known as mudéjar),<sup>46</sup> and the use

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<sup>45</sup>Repoussé is a design raised in relief by hammering on the reverse side.

<sup>46</sup>For more information on tin work and the Moorish influence see Gloria Giffords and Yvonne Lange, The Art of Private Devotions: Retablo Painting of Mexico (Dallas, TX: InterCultura, Fort Worth and The Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, 1991); Gabriella Palmer and Donna Pierce,



Figure 6.18 St. Anthony of Padua and the Christ Child. First half of nineteenth century. Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-18.

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Cambios: The Spirit of Transformation in Spanish Colonial Art (Albuquerque: Santa Barbara Museum of Art and University of New Mexico Press, 1992); and Boyd, Popular Arts, pp. 295-301.



Figure 6.19 St. John Nepomuk. He is one of the saints found carved in the *reredos* of *La Castrense* in Santa Fe, and was also represented on the *reredos* (B) painted by José Aragón for the *Santuario de Chimayo*. Second half of nineteenth century. Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-15.



of glass painted in floral patterns indicates a post-1850 origin. Glass was virtually unknown in New Mexico until the coming of Americans and that which was available was very expensive. Commonly found in *moradas* and all Spanish religious buildings were wooden candelabrum (Figure 6.20).

Like the *Santuario de Chimayo* this *morada* had an embroidered textile banner. The banner, which Ahlborn dates to post-1925, shows the Crucifixion in oil colors and says, "Fraternidad Piadosa D [e] N [uestro] P [adre] J [esus] D [e] Nazareno, Sección No. 12, Abiquiú, New Mexico."<sup>47</sup>

There were fewer *bultos* found in the South *morada* with the oldest being St. Francis of Assisi (Figure 6.22) and the Immaculate Conception (Figure 6.23).

They are both carved wood, gessoed, and painted and date to the first half of the nineteenth century. St. Francis is in a blue habit and holds a cross, skull, and rosary beads. The Immaculate Conception (identified by the colors of her clothing, red and blue) is painted with oil paints which have covered the earlier tempera paint. Ahlborn mentions a special local name given to this bulto, *La mujer de San Juan* (the woman of St. John), a reference to the statement from the Gospels when Jesus, from the Cross, placed Mary into the care of John.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 140.

<sup>48</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p.140; John 19:26-27.

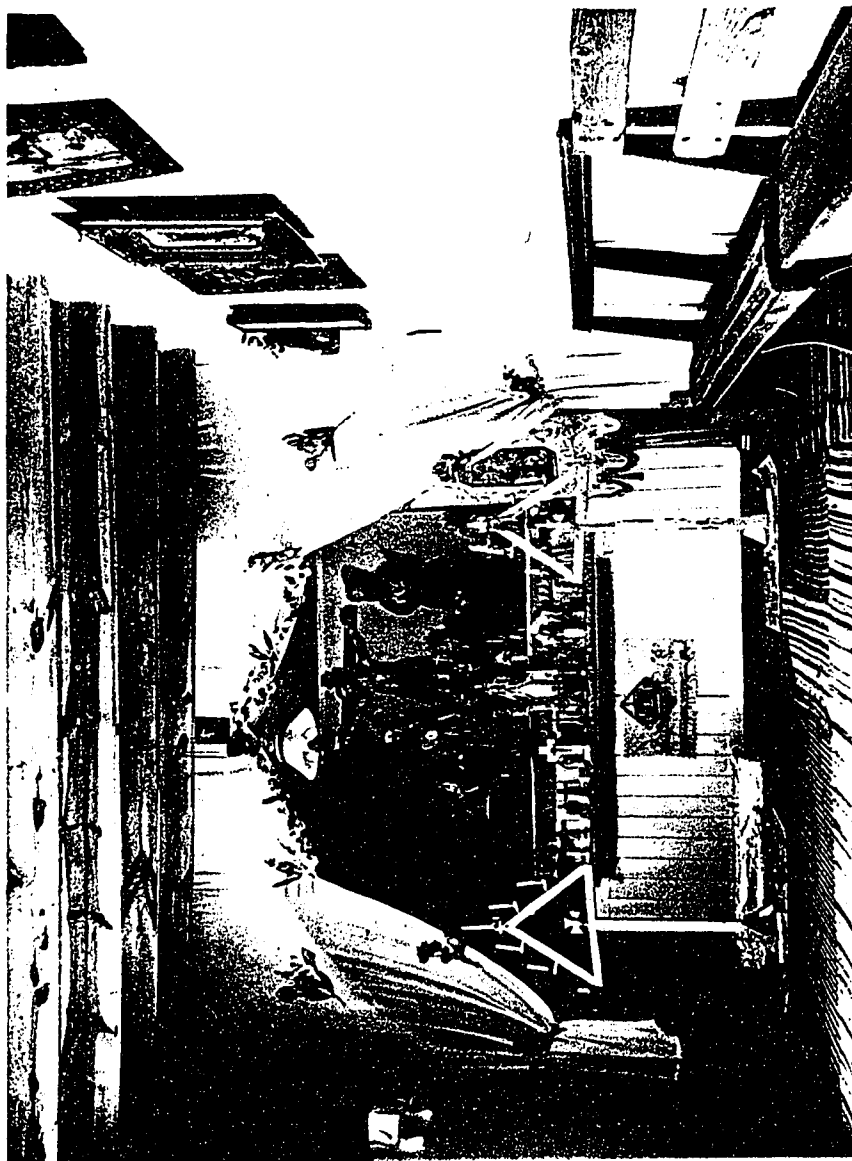


Figure 6.20 Interior of the South *morada*. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-4.



Figure 6.21 St. Joseph and Christ child (left), Chromolithograph, fourth quarter of nineteenth-century. St. Peter (right), Chromolithograph in tin frame, third quarter of nineteenth -century. Unidentified tinsmith. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-21.

Two more Virgins appear in the South *morada*. They are Our Lady of Sorrows (Figure 6.24) located on the Gospel side of the altar<sup>49</sup> (the normal location for a statue of the Virgin), and the Virgin and Child (Figure 6.25).

This second *bulto* is located on the Epistle side of the altar (which in itself was unusual) but it also has been given a different local name. This *bulto* was also known as St. Rosa de Lima, the first native-born individual in the Americas to be canonized a saint (1671). After joining the Dominican Order she was well known for the tortuous penance she inflicted upon herself as well as her mystic visions. She had also committed her life to the care of sick indians and slaves in Peru. In Christian art she is often depicted with a crown of thorns or a scourge nearby.<sup>50</sup> St. Rosa was the traditional patroness of the area following its first settlement by the Spanish. This would not be surprising with the initial settlement of Abiquiú occurring with repurchased indians. Both Virgins are carved out of wood, gessoed and painted. Each is dressed in pink satin, and has artificial flowers. Our Lady of Sorrows has a tin crown and the Virgin with Child (Santa Rosa) has a cross of wood and a shell crown. Both are by unknown *santeros* and date from the second half of the nineteenth-century. While the

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<sup>49</sup>The Gospel side of the altar is to the left of the altar as you face it. This is due to the fact that the Gospel reading is usually read from the pulpit to the left of the altar. The Epistle side of the altar is to the right of the altar as you face it. This is due to the fact that the readings from the Old and New Testaments are usually read from a lectern to the right of the altar.

<sup>50</sup>Apostolos-Cappadona, The Dictionary of Christian Art, p. 296.



Figure 6.22 St. Francis of Assisi, first half of nineteenth-century, Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-15.



Figure 6.23 Immaculate Conception, first half of nineteenth-century, unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-16.



Figure 6.24 Our Lady of Sorrows, third quarter of nineteenth-century, unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-19.



Figure 6.25 Virgin with Christ Child or Santa Rosa de Lima, fourth quarter of nineteenth-century, unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-20.





Figure 6.26 Christ with angel, early twentieth-century, "Abiquiú Santero." Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-13.

clothing is colorful and flowers are included, Our Lady of Sorrows is still the sorrowful mother. Clothing was made for the Virgin by local settlers. Sometimes jewelry was fashioned for the statue. These gifts of clothing and jewelry were often gifts of thanks for an answered prayer.

At the center of the altar is a crucifix with an angel (Figure 6.26). It is attributed to the "Abiquiú morada santero." Of carved wood, gessoed and painted, it has a waist cloth of purple fabric and the angel has tin wings. The cross is black with an iNRi<sup>51</sup> plaque attached. Also attributed to the "Abiquiú morada santero" is the *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Ecce Homo)( Figure 6.27). This carved wood, gessoed and painted bulto, has a black horsehair wig, a crown of thorns, a gown of purple, and holds a palm cluster and rosaries. All of these details fit into the style of the late-nineteenth-century penitente art which shows Mexican baroque influence with the horsehair wig, excessive amounts of blood and wounds exaggerated in the body.

The final *bultos* in the South *morada* are on the Gospel side of the altar and represent St. John Nepomuk and Death. St. John Nepomuk is made of carved wood, gessoed, painted and dressed in a black gown and cap with a white cassock, artificial flowers and a horsehair wig (Figure 6.28). The South *morada's* *bulto* of Death is executed in the San Luis valley style. Carved and

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<sup>51</sup>INRI stands for *Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum*, Jesus Nazareth, King of the Jews.

whitewashed with glass eyes and bone teeth, it is dressed in black and holds a bow and arrow (Figure 6.29).

In the Sacristy of the South *morada* there were wooden chests which held the cooking utensils, heating utensils, ceremonial equipment and penitentes' rule book. There were benches and a snare drum. All of these items were similar to those found in the East *morada*. In the storage room, Ahlborn found cactus scourges (*disciplinas*), corrugated metal sheeting used for roofing, three rattles (*matracas*) used for making noise during the tenebrae services, a black Lenten candelabrum, a ladder, a cross with silvered Passion emblems, and very large penitential crosses. In the corner was a fireplace flanked by tin candle sconces and there were nineteenth-century kerosene lamps on the mantle. As found in the East *morada* there was a tin tub built into the floor that served to wash off all blood that might have flown after penance.<sup>52</sup>

Even though severe penance was forbidden by all of the Archbishops, the brotherhoods continued to perform acts of penance which inevitably drew blood. The *disciplinas* used on bare shoulders and backs as the penitentes moved along the path to Calvary scouraged the body and purified the soul.

Architecturally, the *moradas* are very traditional in basic form and material. Like most New Mexican churches they share the basic profile of the single-nave church, the difference is that the *morada* has the nave divided into

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<sup>52</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 136.

three rooms. The first room was the Oratory for worship during Holy Week and on saint's days and was furnished as earlier described with an altar, painted or carved images (or both) and candles.

The other rooms were for dressing, eating and storage (Figure 6.30). The concept of the contracted sanctuary with the altar area narrowed to the flat backwall, as seen in the Abiquiú *moradas* originated in earlier Spanish and Mexican churches.

In 1479, the architect Juan Guas used a trapezoidal apse plan in San Juan de los Reyes at Toledo, Spain. In 1512, the design was found in America's first cathedral, at Santo Domingo, and by 1612 the design was reflected in Mexico with the revised plans for Mexico City's Cathedral. In New Mexico it was first seen in the stone mission of Zia, built in 1614 (Figure 6.31 "C").<sup>53</sup> Once the Franciscans were established in New Mexico, the contracted sanctuary became the established form. The style survived the 1680 Revolt and was reestablished in 1693. An example would be the chapel of San Miguel in Santa Fe, built in 1710 (Figure 4.45 "D"). In the early nineteenth-century, churches at Ranchos de Taos (1805-1815), Chimayó (1810), and Córdova (after 1820) (Figure 6.31 "G," "H," "I,") all had trapezoid shaped sanctuaries. With penitente brotherhoods

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<sup>53</sup>Kubler and Soria, Art and Architecture of Spain and Portugal, pp. 3, 64, 74.



Figure 6.27 *Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno* (Ecce Homo), second half of nineteenth-century, "Abiquiú morada santero." Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-14.



Figure 6.28 St. John of Nepomuk, early twentieth century, unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-17.

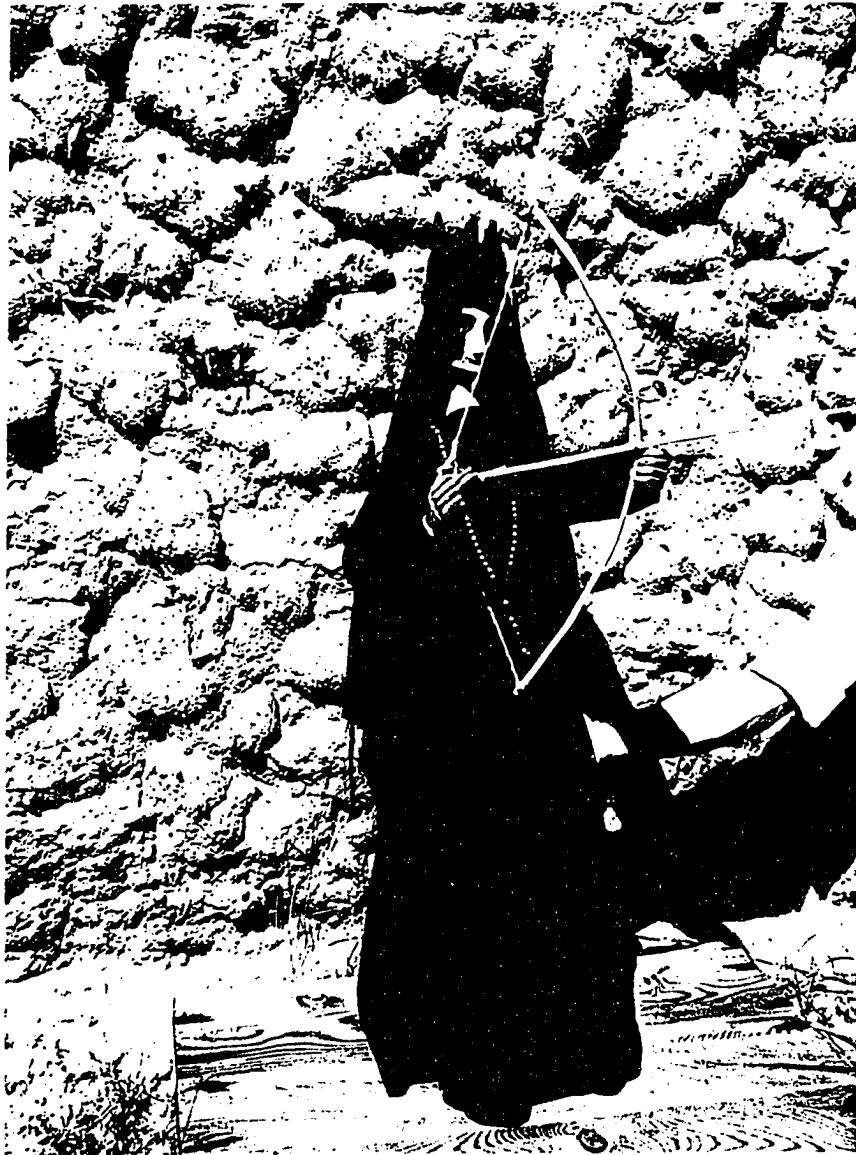


Figure 6.29 Death (*La Muerta*), fourth quarter of nineteenth-century, unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-18.

active in all of these areas, it is not surprising that this design influenced the form of the *moradas*.<sup>54</sup> 1967 photographs of the exteriors of the two *moradas* of Abiquiú show the traditional achitectural structure and the lack of change brought about by French or American forces (Figures 6.32, 6.33).

Comparing the religious art of the *moradas* of Abiquiú with that of other Spanish religious sites, we find similar subjects: Jesus as Cristo, the Nazareno (Ecce Homo), and Santo Niño de Atocha; the Virgin, as the Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Sorrows or Solitude and as Our Lady of Guadalupe. St. Francis of Assisi is found along with St. Peter and St. John Nepomuk, all subjects continuously found in Spanish religious art. Even when nineteenth-century methods like chromolithography are introduced into the region, the subjects are traditionally Spanish (St. Joseph with the Christ child and St. Peter). None of the items found in the *moradas* differed greatly from those found in 1776 by visitors from Durango.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Trieb, Sanctuaries of Spanish New Mexico, p. 61; Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 135. George Kubler and Bainbridge Bunting both observe that while similarity does exist there is no complete uniformity. Kubler, Religious Architecture of New Mexico, p. viii; Bunting, Taos Adobes, p. 54; and Bainbridge Bunting, Thomas R. Lyons and Margil Lyons, "Penitente Brotherhood Moradas and Their Architecture," in Hispanic Arts and Ethnohistory in the Southwest, ed. Marta Weigle (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1983).

<sup>55</sup> Domínguez in 1776 listed similar items in the Santo Tomás mission: a medium bell...altar table...altar cloth...a banner...candleholders...processional cross...a painted wooden cross...ordinary single-leaved door...silver crown...string of seed pearls...ordinary bouquet...painted on copper Our Lady of Sorrows in a black frame...Via Crusis in small paper prints on their little boards...a print of Guadalupe. Domínguez, Missions, pp. 121-123; Ahlborn,



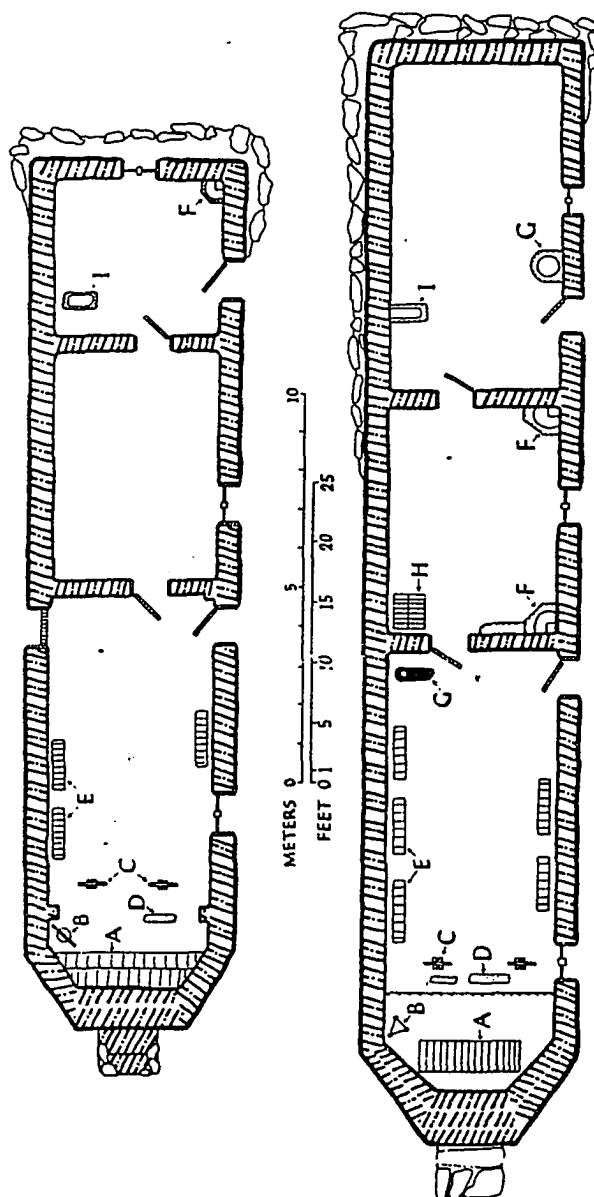


Figure 6.30 Floor plans for the South (top) and east (bottom) *moradas*. A = altar, B = banner, C = candelabra, D = sandbox, E = benches, F = fireplace, G = stove, H = chest, I = tub. In Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 131.

"Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 137.

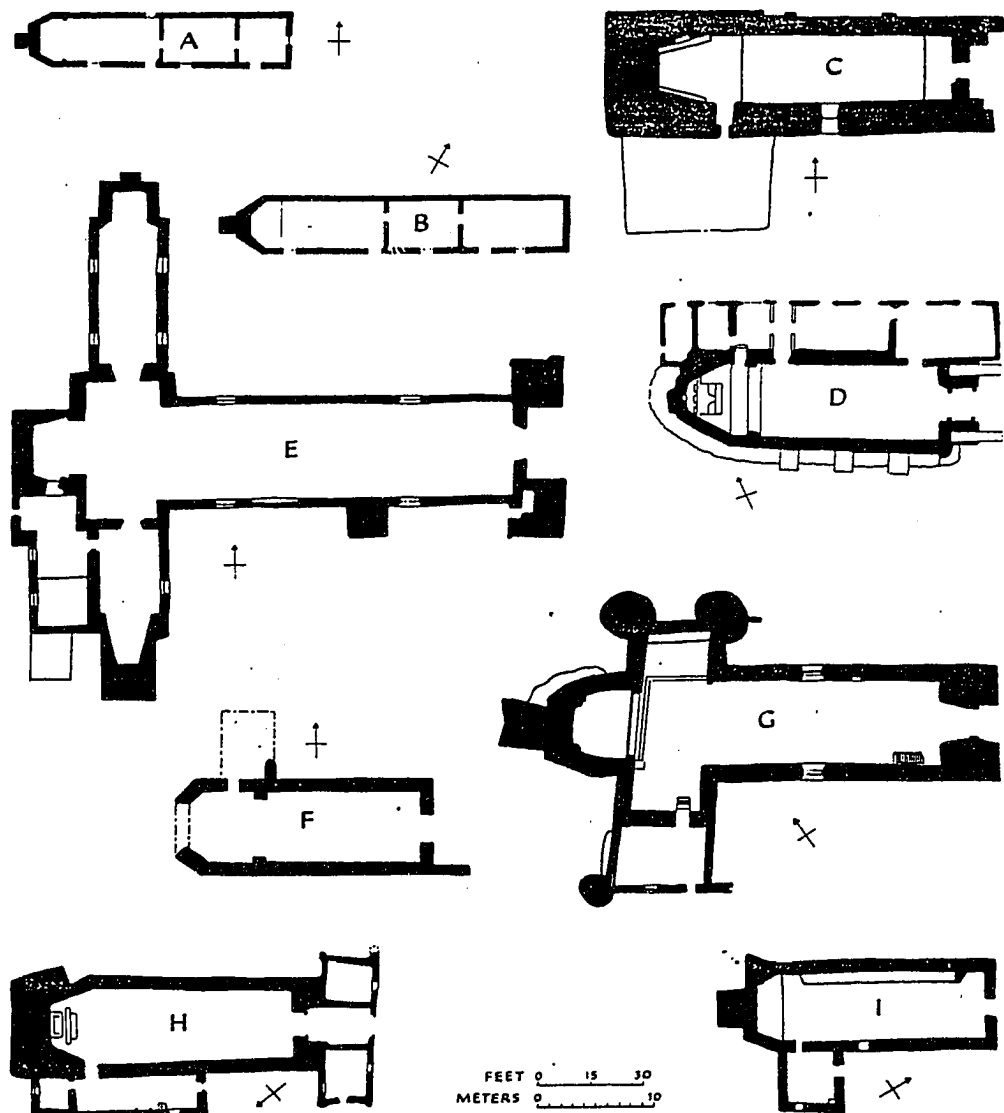


Figure 6.31 Floor plans of *moradas* compared with New Mexican churches with contracted sanctuaries. A = South *morada*, B = East *morada*, C = Zia mission, D = San Miguel in Santa Fe, E = Santa Cruz, F = Santa Rosa, G = Ranchos de Taos, H = *Santuario de Chimayo*, I = Córdoba. In Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," from Kubler, *Religious Architecture*, pp. 30-31, 37, 55, 80, 104. His figure 8 = C, 28 = D, 9 = E, 34 = F, 13 = G, 22 = H, and 35 = I.

Unique items appear, as seen in the portrayals of Death in her cart, but even the death carts are consistent with the origins and themes of the rest of the art.

As Ahlborn so aptly states, "Abiquiú and the penitente moradas reveal that their physical structure, furnishings, memberships and the brotherhood itself are related intimately to, and drawn from, the traditional and persistent Hispanic culture of New Mexico."<sup>56</sup> The *morada* shows no influence of the American church or its French clergy. Unlike the other examples, no architectural changes are found. The changes which are found after American conquest are not in the subjects or styles of the art but in the new found tools available for artistic expression, like the tin cans, thrown away by the Americans and used by the New Mexicans for frames and niches. Lithographs, far cheaper than paintings, were sometimes purchased to represent traditional subjects like Our Lady of Guadalupe. Glass, which was very rare in pre-American conquest New Mexico was used with frames as was seen in both *moradas*.

The *moradas* often became the repository of rejected religious art originally made in New Mexico by santeros and replaced by Eastern statues and prints. An example of which was the depositing of the St. John the Evangelist and the St. Peter in the East *morada* with the destruction of the old church at

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<sup>56</sup>Ahlborn, "Moradas of Abiquiú," p. 141.

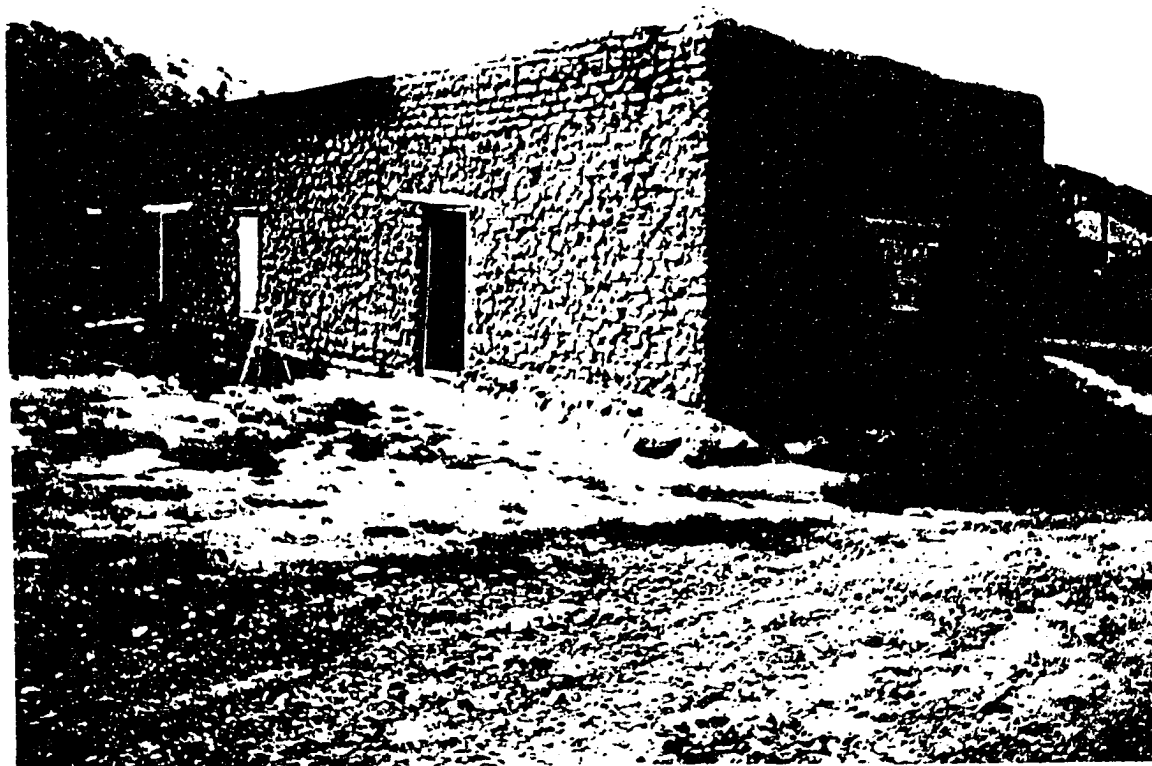


Figure 6.32 Exterior of South *morada*, constructed ca 1900, photo 1967. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-1.

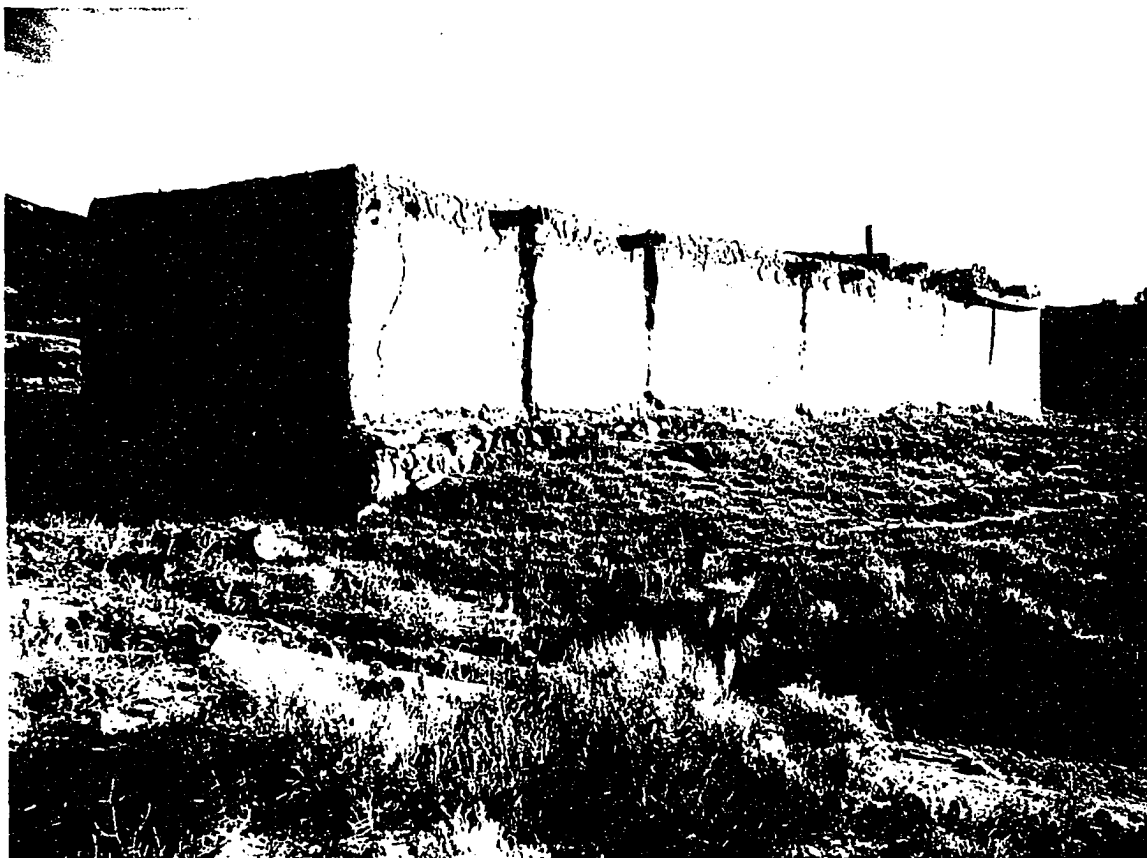


Figure 6.33 Exterior of East *morada*, constructed middle nineteenth century, photo 1967. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-1.

Santo Tomás. The Brotherhoods were also the commissioners of new santero art to fulfill their needs for Passion *bultos* unattainable from American sources. The crucifixes of the Abiquiú and the Master of Penitente Cristos santeros were produced in the second half of the nineteenth century. The lifesize articulated forms which could be tied to the cross and taken down on Easter were not part of contemporary European artistry. The Sacred Heart of Jesus sometimes seen in lithographs was not going to be produced by the santeros. As seen in the advertisements found in the Catholic Almanacs and Directories, the religious art of the nineteenth-century Catholic church reflected European tastes, particularly for Saint Sulpice styled art. The subjects of that art did not include the Holy Week *Cristo Entierro* or *Ecce Homo*. Even if the Brotherhoods could have afforded to purchase the Saint Sulpice art, which is unlikely, the subject matter prevented such actions. The *moradas* of the penitente brotherhoods were the last bastions of a purely New Mexican Hispanic Catholic culture as originally settled by the Spanish. Certainly, ceremonies had become more popular and adapted to the needs of the local communities but the theological foundations for the Holy Week celebrations, penance and public repentance were well grounded in the teaching of the Franciscan missionaries of days long gone. As change pressed in upon the New Mexican population the *moradas* represented the past and stability.

Neither priests or Protestants seemed to see the importance of the Brotherhoods for their mutual aid value. For the Catholic clergy, secret societies

were an anathema, and none of the Archbishops accepted the societies. The medieval command to imitate Christ through acts of charity which are kept secret to preserve humility were overlooked. Only the outward, visible acts of their rites of worship were noted and attacked.

It depended upon the local priest as to the amount of rebuke and repudiation the brotherhood received. The Brotherhoods increased their secrecy as they had more stringent controls placed upon them by the Archbishop. It would seem logical that they distinguished between "true" Catholicism, that practiced in true Hispanic tradition and the "administrative" interpretation of the new clergy.<sup>57</sup>

It is important to remember that the brothers neither usurp priestly functions nor abandon traditional prayers and rituals. "Their patterns of worship and probably their deepest self-conceptions were strictly Roman Catholic and definitely Hispanic."<sup>58</sup> The art found in the *moradas* is exactly what would be found in any Hispanic church. The traditions are traced back to medieval Spain and the teachings of the Franciscan missionaries.

Ignoring the important local functions of the brotherhoods, the new hierarchy by concentrating upon the questions of doctrine and ritual demanded a too high of price for many communities to pay. The result was the strengthening

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<sup>57</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, pp. 75-76.

<sup>58</sup>Weigle, Brothers of Light, p. 76.

of the brotherhoods through the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century.



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS

Religious art in the Catholic Church reflects the sentiments of the church for which it was created. It illustrates biblical stories, instructs the illiterate in church doctrine and provides visual beauty. But definitions of beauty and the focus of doctrine change. As a universal and two thousand year old institution, the Catholic Church continually finds itself changing, adjusting to meet new interpretations of Scripture as divined by the church fathers, to new emphasis in doctrine, and to the artistic sensibilities of those leaders. Regional cultural tastes and sensibilities play a role in the art only in so far as they are tolerated by the dominant religious views.

This conflict in artistic taste and doctrinal emphasis came into sharp focus in the New Mexican territory during the second half of the nineteenth century when French clergy came to New Mexico and brought with them French ultramontane views of papal authority, strict control of parish activities by the ecclesiastical leadership, and a doctrinal focus which precluded any form of ritual which did not adhere to contemporary tastes. They also brought with them French attitudes of what constituted "civilization" and the missionary zeal to

transform their new charges into communities of *culture and grace* (my italics) as they defined it.

These priests came to a region which was settled over one hundred and fifty years earlier by Spanish soldiers, families and Franciscan missionaries. These missionaries, true to their convictions, taught the Indians and settlers a kind of Christianity which focused on Christocentric themes including the redemptive quality of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, the imitation of Christ's example as a way to salvation, and the focus of these ideas in the celebrations carried out during Holy Week, culminating with the crucifixion and burial of Christ.

Ritually and artistically the Franciscans taught the people how to be good Christians and Catholics and how to demonstrate that faith. The *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross), the Rosary, devotions to Jesus and Mary as depicted in the acts of the Passion, and imitation of Christ's sacrifice by acts of severe physical penance were all part of the contemporary Catholic teachings. Passion plays and processions called upon the entire community to participate.

Artistically, the statues found in New Mexico in the nineteenth century, were the folk art equivalent to the fine art produced in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries in Europe, particularly in Spain and in Mexico. The Virgin Mary is portrayed as the mother losing her son, a woman of sorrow (Our Lady of Solitude and Our Lady of Sorrow). The statues of Christ focus on the

Jesus of Holy Week: Jesus the Nazarene, scourged and mocked; Christ on the Cross and the dead Christ interned in the tomb. The statues served two purposes, first, as participants in the Passion processions and second as images of devotion.

Also produced by the New Mexican *santeros* were flat altar screens (*reredos*) and wall art (*retablos*). These designs were influenced by earlier pictures and prints brought to the region by the settlers. The subjects of these works also showed the influence of the Franciscan fathers. Virtually all had some sign of the order, either with the shield of the crossed arms of Jesus and St. Francis or by the saint himself. Other Franciscan saints appeared as well as the advocacy of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin.

As New Mexico moved from the control of the Franciscan friars to that of the Bishop of Durango, isolation affected the development of the church and its art. The inhospitability of the land made it unattractive to secular clergy and the distance from Durango made it difficult to control. The result was the movement into the foreground in New Mexican society of the brotherhoods. Loosely based upon the traditions of the confraternity system, the brotherhoods and communities in New Mexico developed their own rituals to keep alive the Catholic faith taught to them by the Franciscan friars as they understood it. The brotherhoods filled multiple functions. Socially, they maintained order, cared for the poor, sick, orphaned and widowed, and buried the dead. Spiritually they continued in their public devotion to the crucified Christ.

With the entrance of the French clergy in 1851, the focus of the Catholic Church changed. The New Mexican focus on the sacrifice of Jesus as seen artistically in the Crucifix, the Man of Sorrows, Christ entombed and the Sorrowing Mother were replaced by the rise of the Marian century with apparitions of the Madonna and the concurrent rise to prominence of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Over the course of sixty years, Archbishop Lamy and subsequent Archbishops and clergy worked to change both the doctrinal beliefs of the inhabitants of New Mexico, to bring them more in line with contemporary doctrinal views and to change the rituals and art of the people. Lamy as an outward reflection of the church, wanted to civilize and beautify the region. Tracing the art and architecture of five different sites, each a different kind of sacred space, brings to the fore how little influence the overwhelming number of French clergy had upon the Hispanic New Mexican culture.

Not surprisingly, in Santa Fe, the political, economic, and ecclesiastical center of the new diocese and later Archdiocese of Santa Fe reflected maximum change. The Loretto Chapel, built for the first American nuns in the region, is French in its architectural design and ornamentation. The art is from France and reflects the tastes of the period with plaster of paris Saint Sulpice statues of the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph and faux marble altar pieces. The only reference to the Passion is found in a very small crucifix on the altar.

Santa Cruz, a town founded in 1695 and a parish seat for the Rio Arriba region, has a large parish church, completed in 1748 and decorated with the art produced by a parish priest in the late-sixteenth century. Included are the large *Cristo Entierro* and an altar screen still in use. *Bultos* of Our Lady of Rosary, Our Lady of Carmel, and St. Francis continue to grace the altars. Change, when it did occur, was in the form of overpainting the screen with enamel in 1947. French priests assigned to Santa Cruz in 1869, were unable to effect any change in the art found inside of the church. Architecturally, the French attempted to change the church with the addition of lighter architectural elements, but due to the properties of adobe, these attempts did not last.

A private chapel, many of which were built in New Mexico, provides another space for change to occur. The *Santuario de Chimayo*, built by the Abeyta family in 1816, reflects the contemporary tastes of the New Mexicans. Abeyta dedicated his chapel to Our Lord Esquímulas, a Guatemalan advocacy of Jesus, indicating the openness of the New Mexicans to adopting change. The art in his chapel is the product of three of the most famous santeros working in New Mexico in the 1830s, José Aragón, Antonio Molleno and Miguel Aragón. Each brought to his art a unique style, but in true santero form, the iconography is uniform. Once again, Franciscan influence is seen with the insignia in the altar screen. The Passion is indicated with the symbols of Christ's wounds and the large *bulto* carved of Our Lord Esquímulas. The Virgin is Our Lady of Solitude,

and along with the Christ child and St. Joseph there is St. Anthony of Padua, another Franciscan. On the walls are lithographs of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary. Certainly these would indicate French influence, but with Archbishop Lamy's suspending services at the chapel in the early 1880s, the acceptance of the lithographs suggests an acceptance of a cult which found its origins in the five wounds of Jesus and was already accepted by the New Mexicans.

At the other end of the spectrum are the *moradas* built by the brotherhoods. Abiquiú's two *moradas* inventoried in the 1960s lists statues and paintings predating the American conquest. Many of the *bultos* are from the late-nineteenth century, but the subjects harken back to a much earlier period, indicating a market for *santero* renderings of art of the Passion continuing into the French period. A large Jesus the Nazarene, with a crown of thorns; crucifixes with exaggerated flowing blood; *bultos* of Our Lady of Sorrows, of Solitude and the Rosary remain in the *moradas*. Death carts, once used to symbolize the conquering of death by Christ are also there. Huge white crosses, to be pulled by the penitent are stacked in the corner. These chapels, hidden high in the hills found themselves the repository of *santero* art.

In the end, the overwhelming number of French secular clergy had little influence on the culture of the Catholic community outside of Santa Fe, the center of political, economic and social power. What minor influences there

were tended to be in architecture, and particularly in the facades of the churches and chapels. But this French influence was a gloss, a topping applied to the solid, well-established Hispanic base. As Bainbridge Bunting noted in his Early Architecture in New Mexico, the use of wooden "Gothick" shapes added to disguise older adobe religious architecture gave these building "a unique position in architectural history; nowhere else in the world will one find this particular combination of adobe construction and wooden Gothick veneer."<sup>1</sup>

Beneath the visual changes in architecture were the traditional Hispanic attitudes and cultural values that withstood the changes of clergy and political administrations, and the importations of new styles in church architecture and decorations. These attitudes and values were reflected in the art found in the churches and chapels. They reflected the beliefs and traditions carried on for centuries by the generations of Spanish Catholics who had settled in the region. The Passion of Christ and the Holy Week celebrations remained the most important days of the liturgical year. The art of the Passion, the Crucifix, *Cristo*

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<sup>1</sup>John Kessell, "The Adobe Churches in New Mexico," in Ayer y Hoy en Taos: Yesterday and Today in Taos County and Northern New Mexico (Taos, NM: Taos County Historical Society, 1985), p.4; Mort Rosenblum, Mission to Civilize: The French Way (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), pp. 7-8; James T. Moore, Through Fire and Flood: The Catholic Church in Frontier Texas, 1836-1900 (College Station, TX: Texas A and M University Press, 1992), p. 183; Luciano Hendren, "The Church in New Mexico," in Fronteras: A History of the Latin American Church in the USA Since 1513 ed. oises Sandoval (San Antonio, TX: Mexican American Cultural Center 1983), p. 204; Robert L. Shalkop, A Comparative View of Spanish Colonial Painting (Colorado Springs, CO: Taylor Museum, n.d.), p.10; Treib, Sanctuaries, PP. 66-67.

*Entierro*, Jesus the Nazarene, Our Lady of Sorrows and Our Lady of Solitude remained central figures in the churches, private and public chapels, *moradas*, and in public processions.



## CHAPTER 8

### EPILOGUE

Most of the Americans who came to New Mexico during the nineteenth century were Anglo-Protestants. The New Mexican santero art discussed in this dissertation and the culture from which it had sprung was often commented upon by the new conquerors who believed Spanish Catholics to be bigoted, cruel, greedy, tyrannical, fanatical, lazy, superstitious, cheating, and thieving. New Mexicans, who had inherited the reputation of their forefathers among Anglos were further disparaged as racially impure, due to frequent marriages between the Spanish and the Indians. American Protestants thought New Mexican Catholicism, when not outright evil, was laughable.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>W. W. H. Davis observed while in New Mexico in 1857, "As would naturally be the case, a people so various in their origin as the Mexicans, and in whose veins flows the blood of their distinct races, would present a corresponding diversity of character. They possess the cunning and deceit of the Indian, the politeness and the spirit of revenge of the Spaniard, and the imaginative temperament and fiery impulses of the Moor. They have a great deal of what the world calls smartness and quickness of perception, but lack the stability of character and soundness of intellect that give such vast superiority to the Anglo-Saxon race over every other people. . . .They have inherited a portion of the cruelty, bigotry, and superstition that have marked the character of the Spaniards from the earliest times. . . .[They] possess all of the vices of those whose homes are washed by the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea, whence a branch of their ancestors originally came. . . [intermarrying with indians]. There was a period of blending of blood and a new union of races. . . .The

In 1843, Josiah Gregg noted that, "It is a part of the superstitious blindness of these people to believe that everyone of their legion of canonized saints possesses the powers of performing certain miracles, and their aid is generally invoked on all occasions of sickness and distress." Commenting upon the gullibility of the Catholic believer, Gregg notes, "The efficacy of these superstitious remedies will not be difficult to account for, when the powerful influence of the imagination upon disease is taken into consideration."<sup>2</sup>

George Wilkins Kendall, a member of the 1841 Texas Expedition into Santa Fe commented on the figure of San Miguel in Santa Fe, "a more comical figure than this same San Miguel is would be difficult either to imagine or discover. I cannot say that his saintship had ever been tarred, but he had certainly been feathered from head to foot. From his shoulders hung listlessly a pair of hugh, ill-constructed wings, while his head to complete the ludicrous tout ensemble, was covered with a lace cap of the fashion of our grandmothers."

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intermixture between the peasantry and the native Indians is yet carried on, and there is no present hope of the people improving in color." W. W. H. Davis, El Gingo: Or New Mexico and Her People (New York: n.p., 1857; reprint ed., Chicago: The Rio Grande Press, Inc., 1962), pp. 83-85. There is a large amount of literature dealing with American perceptions of the Mexicans in the Southwest. Particularly useful are Raymund A. Paredes, "The Origins of Anti-Mexican Sentiment in the United States," The New Scholar, VI (1977): 139-165; David J. Weber, "'Scarce More Than Apes' Historical Roots of Anglo-American Stereotypes of Mexicans in the Border Regions," in Myth and History of the Hispanic Southwest (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988): 153-168.

<sup>2</sup>Josiah Gregg, Commerce on the Prairie Edited by Max L. Moorhead (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1954), p. 117.

Kendell, witnessing a procession through the streets of Santa Fe mocks the image of St. Michael the Archangel. Poorly made wings and a cap made in the fashion of late-medieval Spain brought smiles. Continuing to comment on the figures in the procession, Kendell notes, "another figure, intended to represent the Virgin but nothing more than a doll of the largest size, was carried upon the same platform. . . . Nothing could be more grotesque and laughable than this comical head of St. Michael, . . . whenever this counterfeit presentment of the saint was brought fairly in sight, we lost our gravity entirely, and were compelled to turn aside to conceal our laughter."<sup>3</sup>

W. W. H. Davis commented upon the saints and images he saw in New Mexican churches in 1857. He found the New Mexicans "extremely superstitious" with an "abiding faith in saints and images." He notes that, "some of the most intelligent of the better class look upon these bits of ware as all-powerful in every emergency; and upon the occasion of a fire in Santa Fe a few years ago, a prominent Mexican gentleman was anxious that one of the wooden saints should be brought from the church to quench the flames." While visiting a friend Davis witnessed part of a service dedicated to healing a man when, "a member of which was quite ill, a number of friends came in with a small image of a favorite saint, altar and other necessary apparatus. They were placed in the middle of the room, when a few coals of fire were brought from the kitchen and put in the

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<sup>3</sup>Kendell, Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition, pp. 339-340.

vessel that contained the incense, which ignited and filled the room with its odor, the whole party the while performing some ceremony that I did not understand. I left them in the midst of their semi-heathen incantations, neither being able to appreciate the service nor being willing longer to witness what I looked upon as a senseless and unmeaning performance. The sick person recovered, and I have no doubt another miraculous cure was placed to the credit of the dingy little image."<sup>4</sup>

Davis's most intense invectives surround Our Lady of Guadalupe, "The Virgin of Guadalupe, who heads the list, appears to be the key-stone of the whole system of worship in Mexico....it appears quite incomprehensible how an intelligent person, in the middle of the nineteenth century, can believe in any such nonsense as the pretended appearance of Guadalupe and yet we find the whole corp of the priesthood...encouraging the people to bow down and worship this graven image instead of their Maker."<sup>5</sup>

Franz Huning, an immigrant and trader who lived in Santa Fe, noted the direct involvement of images in everyday life of the New Mexican when he recounted an incident in the summer of 1851. "It was a very dry summer that year, and the people of town prayed for rain every day...a lot of women got hold of their saint, San Miguel (the priest had loaned him to them) and went in

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<sup>4</sup>Davis, El Gringo, pp. 92-93.

<sup>5</sup>Davis, El Gringo, pp. 122-123.

procession to the fields, praying and chanting hymns. It was not long when a thunderstorm came up....seen as a successful procession [it] was a sure proof of the utility of such proceedings. I suggested that it was an accident, but this was indignantly voted down unanimously and declared heretical. When I reminded them of many similar procession without procuring any rain they declared that 'Dios sabe mejor' [God knows best]. That was [a] stunner and further argument [was] of no use."<sup>6</sup>

The Penitente Brotherhoods and their Passion art were the subjects of many American diary entries, newspaper articles and books. Gregg, in Commerce on the Prairies, recounts a 1843 encounter with the Penitentes during Holy Week in Tomé, New Mexico, "when my attention was arrested by a man almost naked, bearing in imitation of Simon, a huge cross upon his shoulders, which though constructed of the lightest wood, must have weighed over a hundred pounds. The long end dragged upon the ground, as we have seen it represented in sacred pictures, and about the middle swang a stone of immense dimensions, appended there for the purpose of making the task more laborious." In addition, Gregg saw penitents with bodies "wrapped with chains and cords," and their backs whipped until bleeding. "The blood was kept in perpetual flow by the stimulating juice of certain herbs, carried by a third person, into which the

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<sup>6</sup>Franz Huning, Trader on the Santa Fe Trail: Memoirs of Franz Huning with notes by his granddaughter Lina Fergusson Browne. (Albuquerque: Calvin Horn Publishing, Inc., 1973), p. 30.

scourger frequently dipped his lash. Although the actors in this tragical farce were completely muffled [hooded], yet they were well known to many of the bystanders, one of whom assured me that they were three of the most notorious rascals in the country." Submitting to this species of penance, the penitents annually received complete absolution of their past year's sins.<sup>7</sup>

The Reverend Alexander M. Darley made it his business to condemn all that was Catholic in the West and found the Brotherhoods and their rites fertile practices to "expose" in his work, The Passionists of the Southwest or the Holy Brotherhood. The book was filled with hearsay, inaccuracies, and incredible prejudice. It, along with other attacks both from inside and outside of the Catholic community, quickly pushed the Brotherhoods underground, away from the sight of society.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Gregg, Commerce on the Prairies, p. 181.

<sup>8</sup>Other journals and works by individuals traveling in New Mexico which include some kind of comment on the culture and art of this region include Hunting, Trader on the Santa Fe Trail; J. W. Abert, Report of Lieutenant J.W. Abert of His Examination of New Mexico in the Years 1846-47 30th Congress, 1st Session, House Executive Document #41. (Washington, DC: Wendell and Van Benthuysen, 1848; reprint ed., Albuquerque: Horn and Wallace, Publishers, 1962); Lieutenant Emory Reports: A Reprint of Lieutenant W. H. Emory's Notes of a Military Reconnaissance Introduction and Notes by Ross Calvin (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1951); Donald Chaput, Francois X Aubry: Trader, Trailmaker and Voyageur in the Southwest 1846-1854 (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1975); James Josiah Webb, Adventurers in the Santa Fe Trade 1844-1847 ed. by Ralph P. Bieber (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1931); Susan Shelby Magoffin, Down the Santa Fe Trail and Into Mexico ed. by Stella M. Drumm, Forward by Howard Lamar (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1962); James F. Meline, Two Thousand Miles on Horseback, Santa Fe and Back (New York: Hurd and

The passage of time did not appreciably improve American attitudes toward the New Mexicans or their art. Alvar Carlson, in his The Spanish-American Homeland: Four Centuries in New Mexico's Rio Arriba (1990), quotes H.T. Wilson's description of the New Mexican in 1880, "the average Mexican greaser, or half-breed, is slow, generally lazy, quite ignorant, very superstitious and non-progressive; and as they live upon less than any other nationality, they have little ambition to accumulate property or wealth."<sup>9</sup> Charles F. Lummis, a loud advocate for the beauty of New Mexico and its life-style, voiced similar sentiments in his work, The Land of Poco Tiempo, "Mexicans [were] inbred and isolation-shrunken descendents of the Castilian worldfinders; living almost as much against the house as in it; ignorant as slaves, and more courteous than kings; poor as Lazarus, and more hospitable than Croesus; Catholic from A to Izzard, except when they take occasion to be Penitentes."<sup>10</sup> This attitude did not prevent individuals such as Lummis, novelist Helen H. Jackson, and

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Houghton, 1867); Sr. Blandina Segale, At the End of the Santa Fe Trail, Columbus, OH: The Columbia Press, 1932; Charles Lummis, The Land of Poco Tiempo (n.p.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893; reprinted ed., Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1952); Davis, El Gringo; and Alexander M. Darley, The Passionists of the Southwest or the Holy Brotherhood (Pueblo, CO: n.p., 1893).

<sup>9</sup>Alvar W. Carlson, The Spanish-American Homeland: Four Centuries in New Mexico's Rio Arriba (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p.85.

<sup>10</sup>Charles Lummis, The Land of Poco Tiempo. Cited in Carlson, Spanish-American Homeland, p. 85, Note 72.

railroad restaurateer Paul Harvey from seeing a charm and marketability of Spanish antiquities in New Mexico. In 1883, The New Mexican wrote an article about "An Historical Feature Which Santa Fe Cannot Afford to Lose," now owned by the Christian Brothers, and in immediate need to repair it. Billed as "the oldest house of worship on the American continent," San Miguel Chapel was a historical site that must be saved, the paper said. Funds were found to repair it.<sup>11</sup> By the 1890s, merchants in New Mexico began to realize that tourists from the East wanted to see something different. They would like to see the adobe structures. In 1912 the last non-Pueblo style structure was built on the Plaza in Santa Fe. Efforts to recreate the Pueblo/Spanish style had begun.<sup>12</sup>

Preservation movements began in California in the 1800s with the attempt to maintain the Franciscan missions along the coast. This movement came later to New Mexico, and unlike the California movement, the architecture to be preserved drew from both the Pueblo Indian and Spanish cultures. The new style was known under a number of different names, "Santa Fe," "Spanish-Pueblo," and "Spanish-American." Commercial entrepreneurs with an eye toward the tourist trade joined historians, anthropologists, and preservationists in the move to

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<sup>11</sup>The New Mexican, March 8, 1883.

<sup>12</sup>See Christopher M. Wilson, "The Santa Fe, New Mexico Plaza: An Architectural and Cultural History, 1610 - 1921," (MA Thesis, University of New Mexico, 1981).



revive the old cultures of New Mexico.<sup>13</sup> Writers and journalists along with the artists and communities were involved in the revival. Illustrations of the churches in New Mexico could be found in Harper's Monthly and Harper's Weekly as men such as Birge Harrison and Charles Graham romanticized the territory in their articles about the "old days" in the West.<sup>14</sup>

In the first decade of the twentieth-century the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, made the initial steps towards building in the new Pueblo-Spanish style. Santa Fe was next as Edgar L. Hewett, an archaeologist and lover of New Mexican culture (particularly Indian), became both the Director of the School of American Archaeology and the Museum of New Mexico. With the aid of many like-minded individuals the public architecture of Santa Fe began to spurn the turn-of-the-century modernism and return to the simpler adobe style. Julie Schimmel noted the change in attitude in a 1922 issue of Home and Garden. An article on New Mexican architecture stated, "Building has begun to emerge from that horrid period following the picturesque frontier days; a period when a 'dobe' house was scorned as 'Mexican' and pretentious brick, or later gingerbread bungalows, were admired by affluent and moderately well-to-do

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<sup>13</sup>In the forefront of these efforts were the Santa Fe Railroad, Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce and Fred Harvey Restaurants and Hotels.

<sup>14</sup>Birge Harrison's illustration of the "oldest Church in America" (actually Santa Cruz) is found in Harper's Monthly 70 (May 1885): 826; Charles Graham's of the interior of the Church at Acoma, New Mexico is in Harper's Weekly 34 (2 August, 1890): 592.

alike."<sup>15</sup> Certainly, this was a totally different attitude from that of the American population fifty years earlier.

For most non-Catholics the faith of the New Mexican was still seen as mystical, naive, and primitive. "From the Anglo point of view, this spiritual life easily turned from folk religion to superstition, from priest to witch, with all deeply couched in the earth. . . ."<sup>16</sup> When the artists did portray the New Mexican, it was often with some sign of the church close at hand, perhaps a *santos*, a *retablo*, or a church facade in the background. Often there was a suggestion of the church and nature living in harmony as if Christianity in New Mexico came literally from the ground. This, of course, was an idealization.<sup>17</sup>

The revival of the Spanish culture included art as well as architecture. The 1920s and 1930s were a period of folk revival throughout the United States, and the Southwest was no exception. The trend did not make any distinction between ethnic, primitive, and folk art, and in 1934 Hispanic crafts of all kinds were exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art as "Religious Folk Art of the

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<sup>15</sup>Julie Schimmel, "The Hispanic Southwest," in Art in New Mexico, 1900-1945 Paths to Taos and Santa Fe by Charles C. Eldredge, Julie Schimmel, and William H. Truettner ( New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1986),p. 106.

<sup>16</sup>Schimmel, "Hispanic Southwest," p. 142-43.

<sup>17</sup>The earliest and most complete work on the art colonies in Taos and Santa Fe is Van Deren Coke, Taos and Santa Fe: The Artist's Environment, 1882-1942 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press for Amon Carter Museum of Western Art and Art Gallery, University of New Mexico, 1963). The bibliography in Eldredge, Schimmel and Truettner, Art in New Mexico is very good.

Southwest." The revival movement in New Mexico was the result of efforts by individuals such as author Mary Austin and artist Frank Applegate who saw value in the wood carvings of men such as Jose Dolores Lopez. Lopez, a carver from a long line of santeros living in Cordova, was encouraged by Austin and Applegate to carve his saints, but they also suggested that "he broaden the range of religious subjects carved, use less color and make popular Anglo objects: lazy Susans and record racks."<sup>18</sup>

The first real attempt to preserve Spanish antiquities occurred in 1913 when seventy-two individuals witnessed the incorporation of the Society for the Preservation of Spanish Antiquities in New Mexico. Its object was stated succinctly: " the protection and preservation of churches, buildings, landmarks, places and articles of historic interest connected with the Spanish and Mexican occupation of New Mexico."<sup>19</sup> This first attempt at preservation has left few traces.

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<sup>18</sup>Schimmel, "Hispanic Southwest," p. 110.

<sup>19</sup>Papers of the Spanish Colonial Society (PSCS), New Mexico State Records Center and Archives (NMSRCA), Santa Fe. Among the individuals present at the incorporation was a veritable list of Whos' Who in New Mexican society: Archbishop J. B. Pitaval, L. Bradford Prince, Amado Chaves, Albert B. Fall, Benjamin Read, Bronson M. Cutting, Jose D. Sena, Camilo Padilla, Venceslao Jaramillo, T. D. Burns, Antonio Lucerno, and Felix Martinez. L. Bradford Prince, was voted President; Felix Martinez, Vice President; Bronson M. Cutting, Vice President; Benjamin Read, Secretary; Antonio Lucero, Treasurer and Archbishop J. B. Pitaval, honorary President. From letterhead of the Society as found in PSCS.

According to Mary Austin in her work, Earth Horizon, she and Frank Applegate became concerned with the loss of the arts of New Mexico. Having dealt with native workmen for repairs to old pieces, Austin and Applegate realized many of the old santero techniques had not been lost.<sup>20</sup>

In 1929 another organization to preserve New Mexican art, The Spanish Colonial Art Society, was incorporated on October 29th. Its stated purpose was "to encourage and promote generally in New Mexico and elsewhere Spanish Colonial Art; to preserve and revive the Spanish Colonial art of every character." It was decided that this could be done by educating the public and the members of the importance of Spanish colonial art in the civilization of New Mexico by holding lectures, exhibitions, public meetings, entertainment, classes and conferences. The Society would also "print, publish, distribute and sell magazines, articles, pamphlets and reports for the dissemination of knowledge concerning Spanish Colonial art throughout the world," and finally to preserve and protect places and articles relating to Spanish Colonial art.<sup>21</sup>

Generally the organizations tried to live up to their lofty goals. The members worked with the Spanish-American Normal School at El Rito, New Mexico encouraging students to learn crafts. The students became the largest supplier of blankets, wood carvings and furniture for the Spanish Arts Shop

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<sup>20</sup>Mary Austin, Earth Horizon (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1932), p. 214.

<sup>21</sup>Papers of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, NMSRCA, Santa Fe.

which was opened by the Society in Santa Fe in 1930. In 1932, items were shipped to the annual January exhibition in Chicago, but only a few of them sold. As William Wroth noted, in the 1920s and 1930s, despite the enthusiasm of the wealthy Anglo patrons in northern New Mexico, Hispanic crafts never "caught on" nationally in the same way Indian crafts did. "Interest was fairly limited to the Southwest and southern California, the areas in which the adobe hacienda revival was taking place. The major interest in Hispanic crafts was as furnishings for these comfortable Southwestern-style adobe homes. The crafts were not, as were the Indian, viewed as valuable art objects in themselves purchased with an eye for speculation."<sup>22</sup> (Not until later in the century was Santero art to find a place in the open collectors market.)

In conjunction with the annual Santa Fe Fiesta, a Spanish Market was established. This became an outlet for the crafts of the contemporary craftsmen. (It is still annually held on the Plaza in Santa Fe each summer.) Following another goal of the Society, Frank Applegate had begun to assemble a permanent collection of "old work" to exhibit in the rooms of the Historical Society in the Old Palace of the Governors.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>William Wroth, "Introduction: Hispanic Southwestern Craft Traditions in the 20th Century," In. Hispanic Crafts of the Southwest (Colorado Springs, CO: The Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1977), p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>One major piece purchased was a retablo from the Llano Chapel which church members from Ranchos de Taos needed to sell. Its was painted by Jose Rafael Aragon. Money was always a problem. There were not always funds available to purchase the old pieces. A perfect example is the Chapel of Talpa,

Perhaps the most important early purchase made by the Society was the *Santuario de Chimayo*. Maria de los Angeles Chaves, granddaughter of the chapel's builder, Bernardo Abeyta, inherited the property from her mother, Carmen Abeyta de Chaves. Financial hardship and a reduced number of pilgrims forced the three remaining members of the Chaves family to begin dismantling the chapel in 1929. Not realizing how valuable the old retablos and bultos were, the Chaves family was about to sell them and the carved wooden doors when the artist Gustave Baumann learned of it and alerted editor E. Dana Johnson of the Santa Fe New Mexican. Johnson, Applegate, architect John Gaw Meem and others publicized the chapel's plight. Mary Austin, who was on the East coast lecturing, heard about the problem and persuaded an anonymous Yale alumnus to give \$5,000 toward the eventual purchase price of \$6,000.<sup>24</sup> The deed was dated October 15, 1929, and handed to Albert T. Daeger, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, in trust for the Church, in a ceremony in the Cathedral garden. The *Santuario* was then assigned to the parish of Santa Cruz de la Canada as one of its missions under the care of the

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detailed in Chapter Two. When this chapel came up for sale in the 1940s, the Society was unable to find the funds to purchase the objects and they left the state when purchased and housed by the Taylor Museum of Fine Arts in Colorado Springs.

<sup>24</sup>Alice C. Henderson, "E. Dana Johnson: June 15, 1879-December 10, 1937," New Mexican Historical Review 13 (1938): 123; Marta Weigle, "The First Twenty-Five Years of the Spanish Colonial Arts Society," In Hispanic Arts and Ethnohistory in the Southwest eds. Marta Weigle, Claudia Larcombe, Samuel Larcombe (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1983), pp. 184-185.

priest of the Congregation of the Sons of the Holy Family. In 1970, the shrine was designated a National Historical landmark.<sup>25</sup>

By the early 1930s the Spanish Arts store was forced to close, and with the death of Mary Austin in 1934 all of the society's activities virtually stopped. There was an attempt by Lenora F. Curtin to revive the society in 1938 but it was only marginally successful. The projects of the New Deal and Federal One<sup>26</sup> in particular, benefited the Hispanic community in New Mexico. The Works Progress Administration/Federal Arts Project work began in 1935 with the establishment of a seven-member advisory board headed by artist R. Vernon Hunter. The arts projects in New Mexico promoted Hispanic crafts. A central figure was Brice H. Sewell, Supervisor of Trade and Industrial Education for the State Department of Vocation Education. Sewell ran this state program from 1933 through 1943 and he combined the local, state and federal funds which enabled him to build vocational schools that provided training for adults in a variety of Hispanic crafts: tanning, carpentry, weaving and iron and tin working. After training, the school would function as a community workshop. In the program's heyday (1936) there were twenty-eight vocational centers in eight

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<sup>25</sup>Beatrice Chauvenet, John Gaw Meem: Pioneer in Historic Preservation (Santa Fe: Historic Santa Fe Foundation, Museum of New Mexico Press, 1985), p. 68.

<sup>26</sup>Federal One was the name given to the arts projects, as a group, during the New Deal. The projects included the Federal Arts Project, Federal Music Project, Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Writers Project and The Historical Records Survey.

counties. The schools aided in the passing of skills from the older trained artisans to the students, making a major contribution to the revival and survival of Hispanic crafts.

Under the Federal Arts Program in New Mexico, E.[Elizabeth] Boyd was hired to design a "Portfolio of Spanish Colonial Design." This Portfolio was a collection of watercolors reproducing the santero art found in the churches, chapels, and private collections in New Mexico. Interestingly, at the same time that this project was being planned and executed in New Mexico, Holger Cahill, the National Director of the Federal Arts Project in Washington, was planning the Index of American Design. This Index was to be a collection of watercolors that would record the European influence in American culture from 1680 to 1900. In New Mexico the Index project eventually employed ten New Mexican artists, who painted bultos, retablos, painted chests, weaving, and *colchas* (embroidery).<sup>27</sup> Many of the watercolors originally planned for the Portfolio

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<sup>27</sup>For a detailed look at the New Deal Arts Projects in New Mexico see Peter Bermingham, The New Deal in the Southwest: Arizona and New Mexico (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Museum of Art, 1989); Representative Art and Artists of New Mexico School of American Research (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico, 1940); William Spurlock, "Federal Support for the Visual Arts in the State of New Mexico," (Masters thesis, University of New Mexico, 1974); The E. Boyd Collection, NMSRCA, Santa Fe; the WPA Collection, NMSRCA, Santa Fe; Spanish Colonial Society Records, NMSRCA, Santa Fe; Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C. For works on the Federal Arts Projects see Francis V. O'Connor, Federal Arts Patronage 1933 to 1943 Exhibition catalogue produced by the University of Maryland Art Gallery (College Park, MD: J. Milard Tawes Fine Arts Center, 1966); Francis V. O'Connor Federal Support for the Visual Arts: The New Deal and Now (Greenwich, NY: New York Graphic Society Ltd., 1969); and on the Index and



ended up in the Index. Today the Index is located in the National Gallery in Washington D.C.

The Second World War and America's shift to a wartime economy changed the focus of the vocational schools, and the federal projects for the arts also ended. With the deaths of Applegate and Austin in the 1930s, the failure of the Spanish Colonial Shop in Santa Fe, and a general loss of interest as the country focused its attentions on the war effort the artistic climate supporting the folk-art tradition changed. It would not be until the 1950s with the involvement of Cady Wells and E. Boyd that the Spanish Colonial Arts Society would be reborn.

Ironically, for all of the presumed superiority of the Anglos culture and the Anglos' often voiced disparaging remarks about the character and beliefs of the Spanish-speaking Catholic New Mexicans, it was they who recognized the artistic value and found the funds, through the Spanish Colonial Arts Society, to preserve the santero religious art and architecture of New Mexico. The Spanish Catholic New Mexicans saw their santos as reflections of their deep reverence for God, Christ, the Virgin and all of the Saints. The artistic rendering of the

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American Folk art see Holger Cahill, American Folk Art: The Art of the Common Man in America, 1750-1900 (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932); Holger Cahill, New Horizons in American Art (New York: Museum of Modern Arts, 1936); Erwin O. Christensen, Popular Art in the United States (London: Penguin Books, 1949); and Erwin O. Christensen, Index of American Design with Introduction by Holgar Cahill (New York: Macmillan, 1950).

piece had always been of secondary importance to the representation of its

meaning. Richard Ahlborn and Harry R. Rubenstein summed it up very well:

santos provided [the] foundation for affective faith and social values in an entire frontier population. Santos, as painted banners or as polychromed statuettes, led processions of conquest across the Americas, as miniatures on medals or reliquiaries, they identified the religious and cultural commitment of priests and laity; as figures rendered in ink on paper, in repousse silver plates, in painted stucco, and glazed ceramics, santos formed an idealized advocate population symbolizing the needs and hopes of spirits sorely tested in life. . . .In frontier conditions of New Mexico, the manufacture of santos is no less impressive than their strength of style and evocative power. . . they must first meet the the criteria of identifiability rather than stylistic integrity. New Mexican santos perform a primary social function as devotional aids. Moreover, they are considered a symbolic community whose members intercede with God on behalf of the Hispanic population and who serve as supportive friends to devout individuals.

The religious art of New Mexico truly did reflect the uniqueness of the Spanish-speaking Catholic New Mexican population of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

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## APPENDIX I

### SANTA CRUZ DE LA CANADA

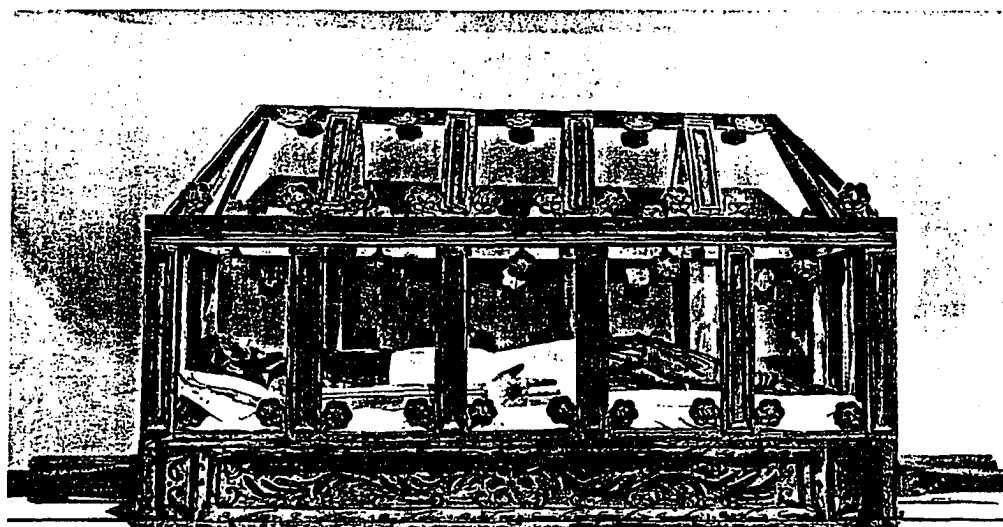


Figure I.1 *Santo Entierro* after restoration, 1982. Photo by Tom Velarde. In La Inglesia, p. 95.



Figure I.2 South Chapel ca 1872. Photo by H. T. Hiester. In La Inglesia, p. 21.



Figure I.3 South Chapel altar, 1911. Photo by Jesse Nusbaum. Courtesy of Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 13917.

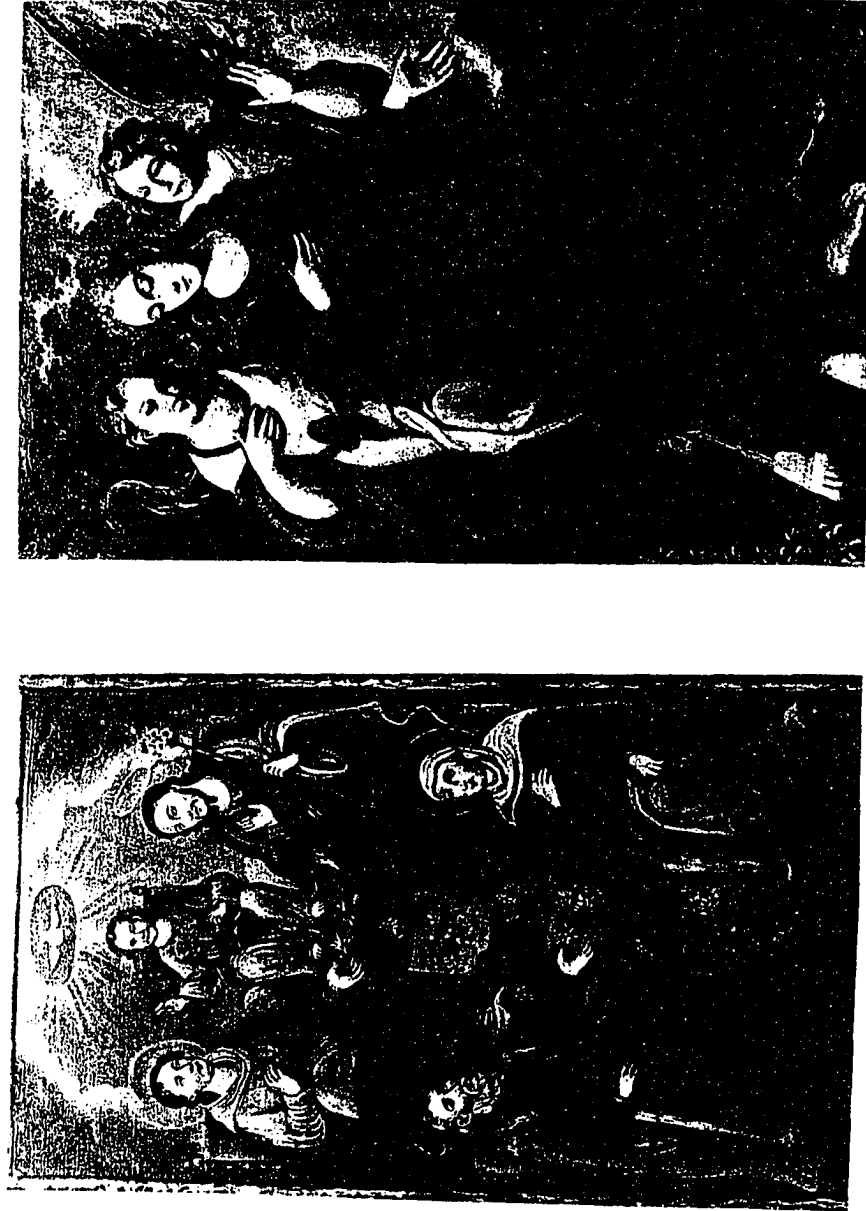


Figure I.4 Two top paintings in Fray Andrés García's altar screen. *The Holy Family and Santa Rosalia de Palermo*. Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 87.

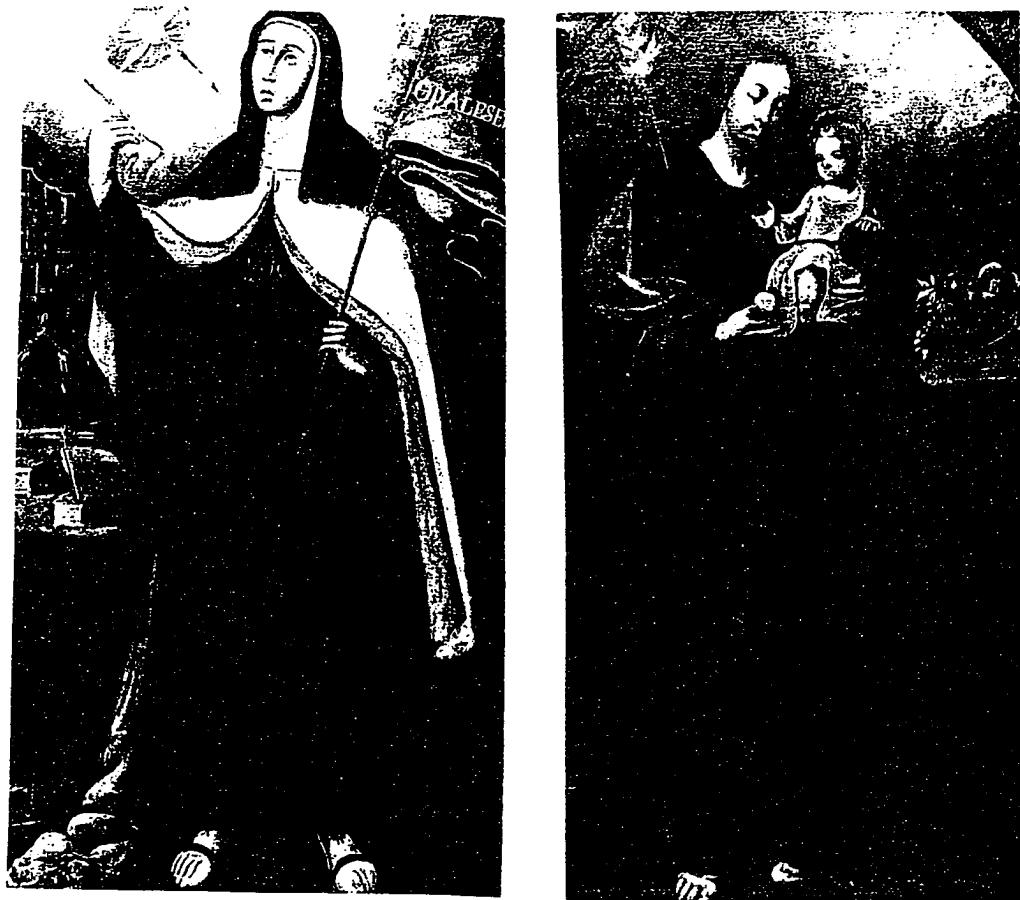


Figure I.5 Bottom left paintings in Fray Garcia's altar screen. *St. Teresa de Avila* and *St. Joseph and the Christ child* (after restoration in 1982). Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 85.



Figure I.6 Lower right paintings in Fray Garcia's altar screen. *St. Francis Xavier* and *St. Barbara* (after the restoration in 1982). Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglesia*, p. 86.





Figure I.7 Two paintings found on either side of the altar. *St. Jerome* and *St. Cayetano* (after restoration in 1982). Photo by Tom Velarde. In *La Inglezia*, p. 88.

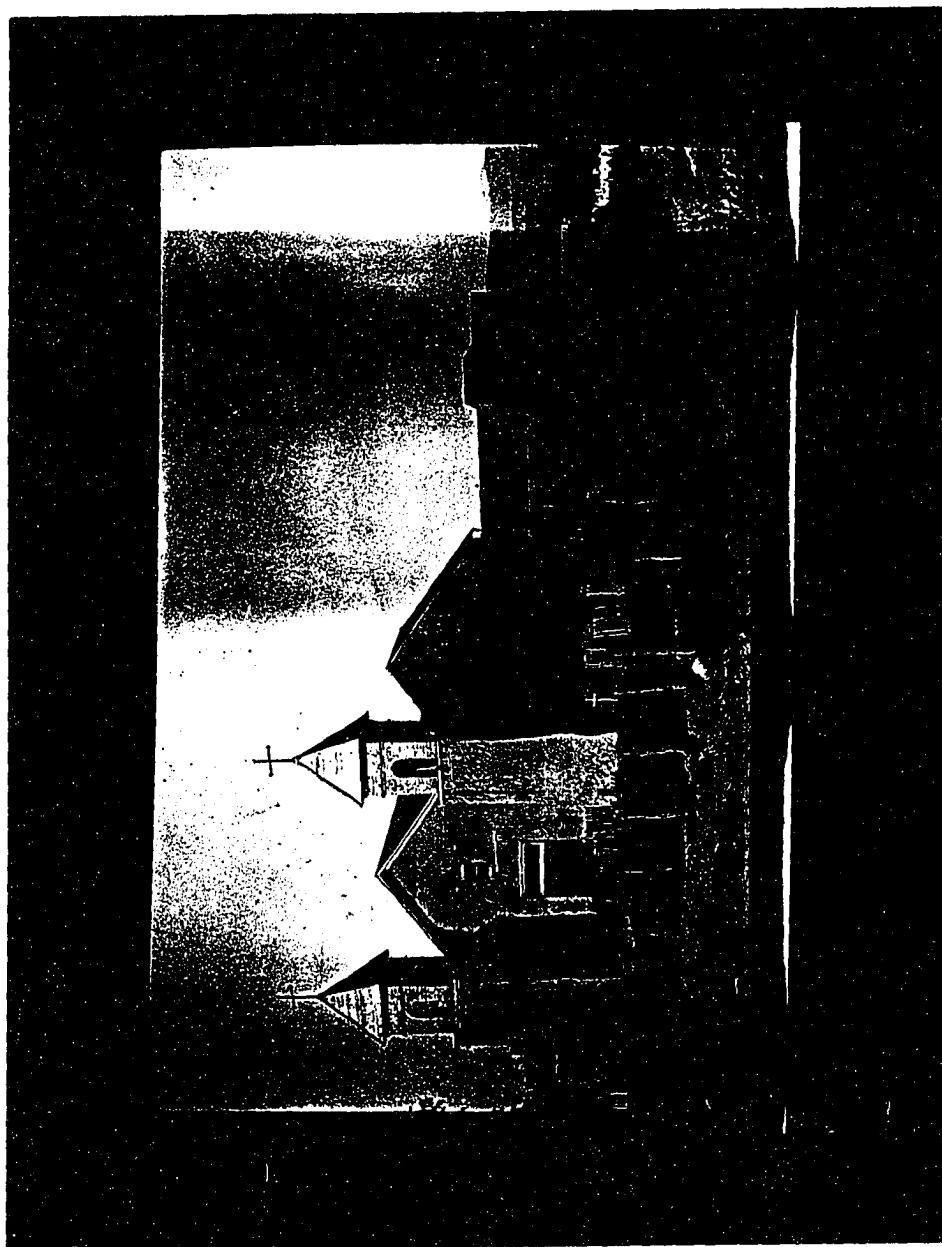


Figure I.8 Exterior of the church at Santa Cruz, 1908. Photo by Alfred V. Kidder. Courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 31493.

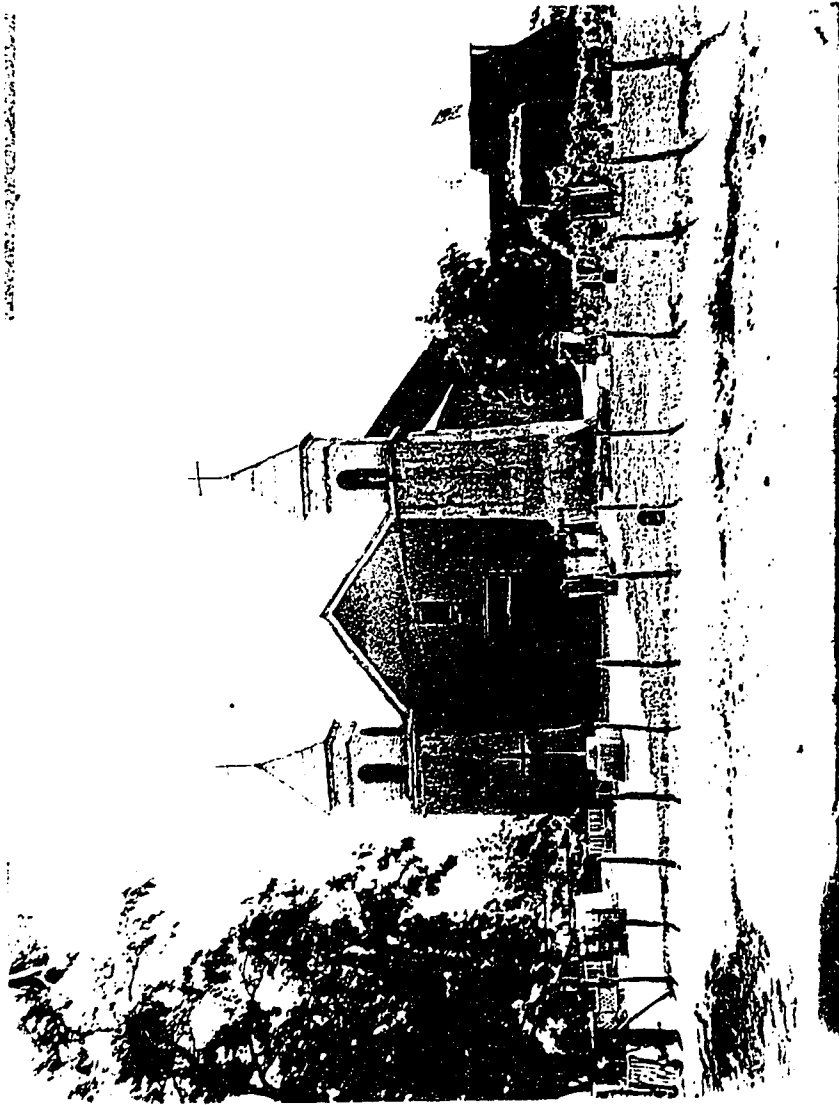


Figure I.9 Exterior of the church at Santa Cruz, 1918. Photo by T. Harmon Parkhurst. Courtesy of the Museum of New Mexico, Neg. No. 13939.

## APPENDIX II

### ABIQUITU

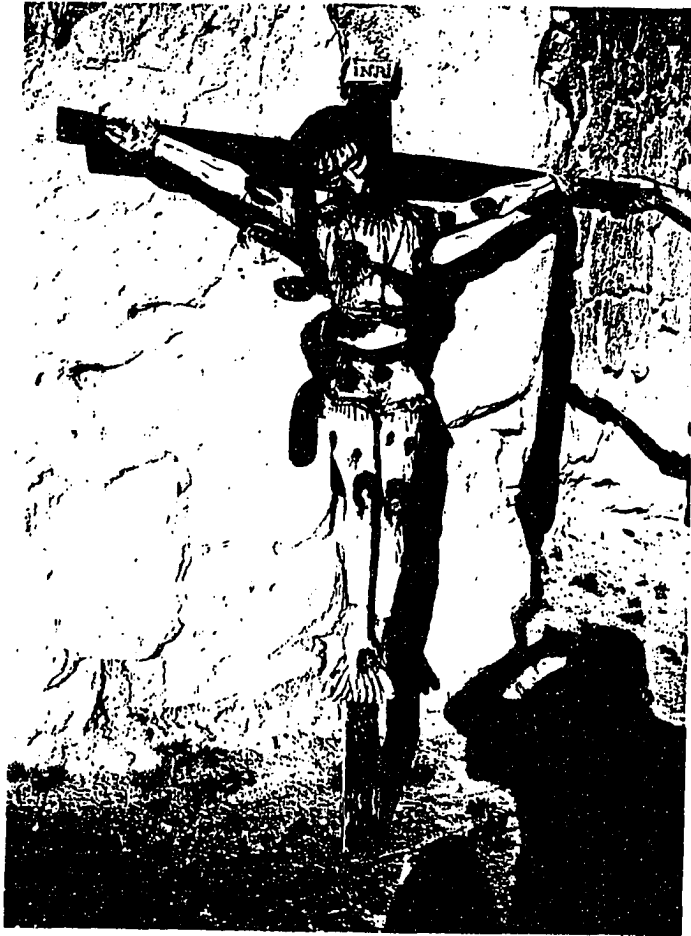


Figure II.1 Crucifix, second half nineteenth century. Unidentified santero. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M2-4.



Figure II.2 Crucifix, second half of nineteenth century. Unidentified santero.  
Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No.  
M2-9.



Figure II.3 Crucifix, second half of nineteenth century. Unidentified santero.  
Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No.  
M2-10.

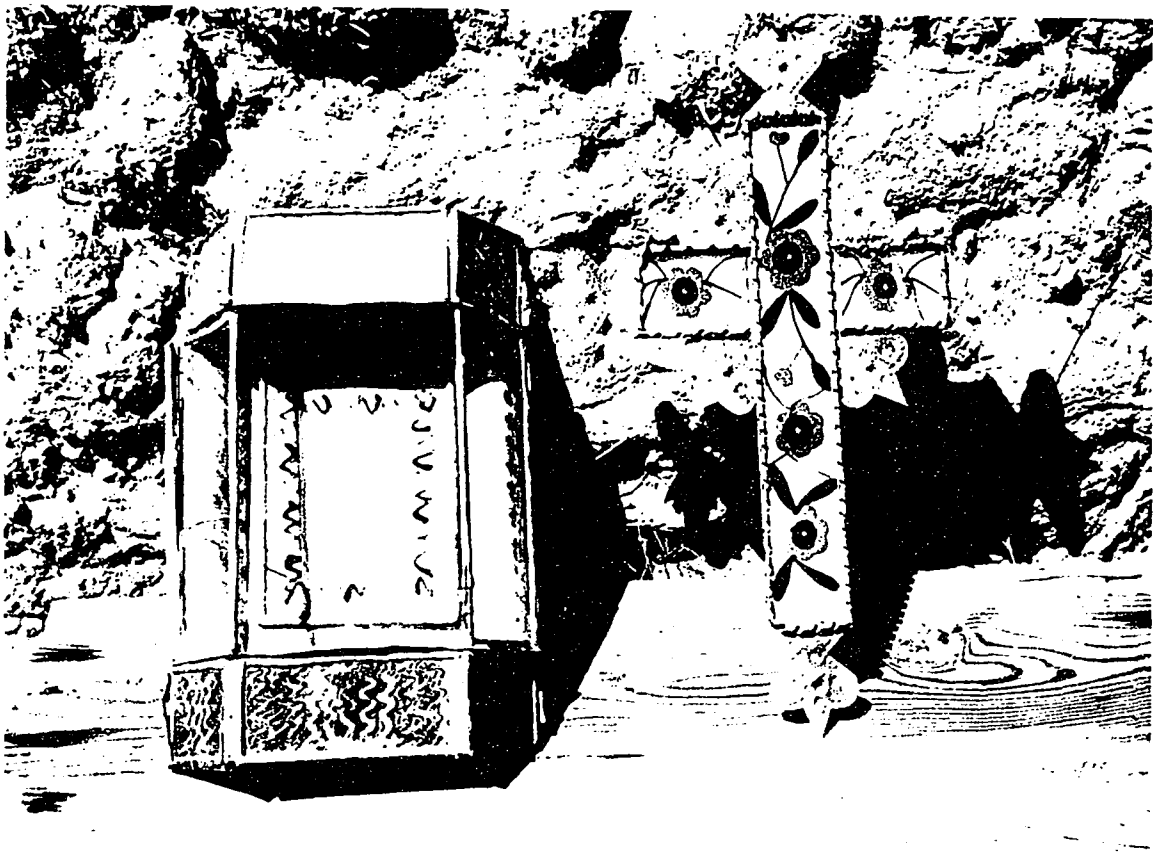


Figure II.4 Tin niche with print of Christ child (left), second half of nineteenth century, unidentified tinsmith. Cross (right), fourth quarter of nineteenth century, unidentified tinsmith. Photo by Richard Ahlborn. Courtesy Smithsonian Institution, Neg. No. M1-22.

## VITA

Born in 1951, Shirley J. Sands is a native of Bremerton, Washington, and graduated high school in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, in May 1969. She attended Kansas State Teachers College (Emporia State University) from August 1969 through May 1974, earning a degree of Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences and a master's in Social Science with an emphasis in Political Geography and History. From graduation until her return to graduate school to pursue her doctorate, Ms. Sands worked in banking and private industry. Upon returning to Graduate School at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge in the Spring of 1987, Ms. Sands continued to work in broadcasting for WRKF-FM, Public Radio in Baton Rouge on a part-time basis while holding a graduate teaching assistantship in the Department of History at Louisiana State University. In 1995, Ms. Sands began working full-time in radio and continued teaching history for the Division of Continuing Education Evening School at Louisiana State University. She will receive her doctorate in history from Louisiana State University in August 1999.



DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

**Candidate:** Shirley Jean Sands

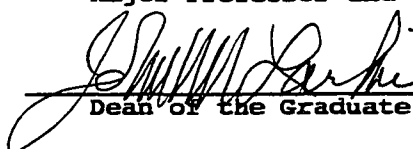
**Major Field:** History

**Title of Dissertation:** Religious Art: Reflectors of Change in the  
Catholic Church in New Mexico, 1830-1910

**Approved:**



Major Professor and Chairman



Dean of the Graduate School

**EXAMINING COMMITTEE:**



Edward H. Henderson

Meredit Veldman

Christy Koe

**Date of Examination:**

May 4, 1999