B. Sunday Eiselt

THE JICARILLA APACHES AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TAOS REGION

INTRODUCTION

For the Jicarilla Apache, Taos is the center of the earth (Opler 1938). For nearly 500 years they lived and died there, raised families, and with their Taos neighbors fought the Spanish and later the Americans (Gunnerson 1974). Their most sacred shrines dot the stunning landscape of the San Luis Valley and are still visited by the Apache community today. Taos lives in the hearts and minds of the Jicarilla even though their presence is easily overlooked by local residents, historians, and archaeologists. In this paper, I consider the Taos region from a Jicarilla perspective, identifying their sacred places and major settlements through ethnographic and historical documents. Archaeological survey and excavation similarly confirm a strong and distinctive Jicarilla presence in the area. Taos is important to our understanding of Jicarilla history and archaeology, and as such is the focus of archaeological efforts that exemplify Paul Williams' characteristic dedication to the region and its people. These efforts are aimed at elevating Taos heritage and culture while producing new knowledge about the unwritten histories of the region through community-based research and education.

JICARILLA COSMOLOGY AT TAOS

As Morris Opler once observed, it is easy to locate the heart of the Jicarilla universe but not so easy the place of emergence. Taos is the heart of the Jicarilla world, a world that was populated with mythical heroes, vanquished monsters, and holy deities made by the earth and sky. These deities included the sun and the moon, each of whom after their emergence near Taos produced a child with White Shell Woman, a young Jicarilla girl who was separated from her band. White Shell Woman gave birth to *Naiyenesgani* (Killer-of-the-Enemies) when the sun shone upon her, and later to *Kubatc'istcine* (Child-of-the-Water) while sleeping under the moon.[1] She lived near Taos with her two sons. The powers of Child-of-the-Water, the more feminized character being involved with moisture, plants, and organic increase, ultimately generates some of the situations in which Killer-of-the-Enemies, the more masculinized counterpart, has to intervene. The saga of Killer-of-the-Enemies and his brother Child-of-the-Water forms a major part of the Jicarilla creation narrative that touches upon themes of cognitive or ritual geography, the origins of ceremony, and protection and alliance with neighboring Pueblo groups. Their heroic adventures establish the Taos landscape as Jicarilla cultural space, where they play important social and economic roles in shaping the history of the region.

The Rio Grande Gorge, for example, is more than the geological wonder that is billed in tourist brochures and visitor exhibits. To the Jicarilla, this breathtaking canyon was etched into the earth by the horns of a giant killer elk that was speared and skinned by Killer-of-the-Enemies with the help of a gopher assistant and four differently colored flint-bearing spiders. This event began somewhere near Baldy Mountain at Eagle Lake east of Taos, but ended in the gorge where the animal was slain (Mooney 1898:204). Jicarilla stories contain incredible details about the techniques

and rituals surrounding the capture of specific animals. In the killer elk story, the gopher conjures the magic of the hunt by digging four tunnels in each of the four directions. The spiders weave a magical web at the end of each tunnel to capture the elk, and stand ready with their protective flint shields, colored according to each of the four cardinal directions. The gopher tunnels directly beneath the sleeping elk enabling Killer-of-the-Enemies to spear it in the heart four times from below. The Rio Grande Gorge and other large canyons are ploughed into the earth by the raging elk as he searches the tunnels in vain. He is finally halted at the gorge by the web of the black flint spider from the north.

From this story, we not only learn how to look at the Taos landscape from a different and more wondrous perspective, but also about Jicarilla hunting strategies and magic, and some of the spiritually charged items that were provided to the Pueblos and other communities for exchange. In the killer elk story, the animal is ultimately skinned and butchered, leading to the origins of leather clothing. Some of the butchered meat is given to the gopher and the rest is taken to Taos Pueblo. The skin clothing is used later as a magic shield to protect Killer-of-the-Enemies from the talons of a murderous eagle at Standing Rock on the Navajo Reservation. Again, the feathers from the vanquished giant eagle were given to the Taos people (Curtis 1907:68). In another encounter with eagles near Picurís Pueblo, Killer-of-the-Enemies learns how to fly, helps the eagles defend themselves from their enemies, the bees, and returns with feathered gifts for the pueblo (Opler 1938:104). These and other stories clearly point to the role of ceremonial exchange in Plains-Pueblo interactions and the historical developments that would bring the Jicarilla into even closer historical contact with Pueblo communities in the northern Rio Grande (Ford 1972; Spielmann 1982).

The next adventure reveals the important role of the Jicarilla as protectors of the Pueblos and tells us something about how they came to be accepted at Taos Pueblo. In this story, Killer-of-the-Enemies takes the form of a vagabond. Wandering into the pueblo for food, he is mistreated and then chased from the village. This happens four times. Each time he leaves, he transforms the pueblo corn stores into masses of writhing snakes. Alarmed, the Taos people call him back and beg him to undo his magic. After realizing that his powers might actually help them, the Taos people ask Killer-of-the-Enemies to rescue some of their people from a monstrous frog, which had dragged them to the bottom of a lake. This frog kept them as slaves in his house and struck terror into the hearts of everyone in the land through his croaks that sounded like sheet lightning at night. James Mooney, who collected this story in 1898, states that the lake is marked by a spring about a mile west of the pueblo. The lake is also described as a sinking place or a marsh for which the only likely candidate is the spring at El Prado where pueblo herds are still grazed today. Identified as *Los Estiércoles* in 1776, this land was an extensive swamp and lush pasturage for grazing cattle (Jenkins 1966:99).

Killer-of-the-Enemies returns to rescue the Taos people. Using hoops of different colors, he opens the center of the lake and descends to the bottom by a long ladder, leading the victims out one by one under the cover of a smoke plume created by a magic fire drill. The people are so grateful that they invite White Shell Woman and her sons to take up residence at the pueblo, a well-remembered and documented alliance that persisted through the historical period (Gunnerson 1974; Opler 1938).

This story not only reveals the protective aspects of the Jicarilla alliance with Taos Pueblo, it also culturally encodes thematic elements of social and paramilitary resistance to colonial and postcolonial enslavement. The thinly veiled character of the monster frog could easily be played by Spanish slavers, who, wielding their thunderous muskets, pressed the Pueblos into service for their colonies, markets and missions (Brooks 2002). The story also recounts with great accuracy the role of the Jicarilla in facilitating

Pueblo insurrection and their many flights from Spanish oppressors throughout the 1600s. In short, the lush pastures of El Prado sustain more than just cattle. They also speak to a long and vibrant history of Jicarilla paramilitary strength (Eiselt 2006).

Anyone who has had the misfortune of finding themselves at Embudo Station during the torrential summer monsoons that dislodge large boulders, carrying people and equipment to the bottom of the gorge, will appreciate this next story of the galloping rock. Powered from the inside by a magnificent pair of black and white rams, the killer stone lived at Pilar and rolled all over the land, crushing and terrorizing its people. After four vain attempts, Killer-of-the-Enemies manages to head off the rolling rock and shoot it in the spine. Splitting in half with a thunderous clap, the rock releases the two rams. In one version, Killer-of-the-Enemies shoots the giant rams with white flint and obsidian tipped arrows and in another they are told to retreat to the mountains. The killer rock still lies where it was shot in the Rio Grande. The Jicarilla still visit it today; only now they share the space with mostly non-Native kayakers, fisherman, and sunbathers who are unaware of its healing powers. Powder and shavings from the rock can heal wounds and illnesses and protect military servicemen and veterans of war (see also Opler 1938:73).

After vanquishing numerous other monsters, Killer-of-the-Enemies travels to the Taos area to counsel the Jicarilla one last time and provide them with one final gift before leaving to live with his father the sun. He remade the northern Río Grande in the form of his mother, White Shell Woman, locating her heart at the El Prado Marsh where he previously had killed the monster frog (Goddard 1911:206; Opler 1938:43). The four sacred rivers, each representing the gendered halves of her body, flowed from her heart to form the Río Grande, the Canadian, the Arkansas, and the Pecos. Water from two of them, one male and one female, is obtained and mixed together for the Long-life Ceremony of newborn children.

White Shell Woman's heart also is the focal point of the first Bear Dance ceremony. The heart is located where the first fires for the ceremony stood. Opler (1938:43) records that these fires flared up at the marsh on two different occasions following the ceremony. During the first time, the Taos Indians were powerless to stop it. They dug ditches and filled them with water, but the water burned like oil. Finally they called upon an old Apache man and woman to put it out. The second time it burned, it was brought under control by the spirit of an old Apache man who had recently died. Jicarilla prophesy states that the El Prado marsh will burn two more times and on the fourth time it will burn all over the world (Opler 1938:113).

The protector spirits of the Jicarilla reside within the body of White Shell Woman. Roughly equivalent to Pueblo *Katsinas*, the *Hactcin* are the formal personifications of the power of objects and of natural forces. There is a *Hactcin* of every animal, bird, substance, or natural phenomenon that you might encounter near Taos, and the Jicarilla are able to call on these natural forces for protection and assistance in times of need. Principal *Hactcin* reside in the mountains surrounding the valley where they were placed by Killer-of-the-Enemies. These areas are marked with rock shrines that can still be seen today. Other important shrines in the Taos area are shared with Pueblo people. Like Taos, the Jicarilla obtained ochre from the Blue Lake area and considered Hopewell Lake near Tres Piedras a holy place of emergence. Red clay was obtained near Questa and was used by the runners in their annual relay races (Opler 1944).

Micaceous clay shrines also figure prominently in the Jicarilla landscape. This clay was so important to Jicarilla women that it was embodied by its own *Hactcin* spirit. Pottery making was a mainstay of the Jicarilla economy throughout most of the historical period and women relied upon it to generate income for the family. Commenting on Jicarilla pottery making in 1865, Father Antonio José Martinez of Taos stated that the Jicarilla had always lived between the

villages and the intermediate mountains, "working and selling pottery to our people" (Keleher 1964:48-49). Opler (1938:238) recorded a lengthy account of how the clay *Hactcin* taught women to make pottery. This story, like the adventures of Killer-of-the-Enemies, provides detailed information about the nature and organization of Jicarilla ceramic manufacturing, clay processing, and the array of vessel forms that were produced. Clay is a form of currency in this story and raiding for horses is attributed to the need for women to transport their clay and pottery products.

The story of the origins of clay pots takes place in the Picurís Mountains where the clay *Hactcin* lives, and although clay shrines are associated with all of the major micaceous clay sources in the northern Rio Grande, the most sacred one is located at the Cueva Blanca mine south of Taos (Opler 1971:30).2 The pipes for the rain ceremony and other sacred ceremonies had to be made with this clay, and much of the pottery produced by Jicarilla women for trade likewise came from Picurís sources nearby (Eiselt 2006; Opler 1938:218). Symbolic attachments to clay, taken from the body of White Shell Woman and sanctified by the divine essence of the clay *Hactcin,* reveal the cognitive basis for ceramic manufacturing and the important role of Jicarilla women in the trade economy of Taos.

The animated world of the Jicarilla reveals the ways in which ethnicity, cultural boundaries, and economy were embedded within society, and how they built upon traditional views of community and exchange stemming from long standing traditions of Plains-Pueblo interaction. Jicarilla cosmogeography also explains, in part, the nature of settlement pattern and archaeological site distributions in the region. The special rites, observances, and ceremonies associated with the worship of White Shell Woman ensured a constant circulation of people through the territory, but specific areas affiliated with the principal *Hactcin* at Taos served as the district headquarters for individual bands throughout the historical period.

JICARILLA SETTLEMENT OF THE TAOS REGION

Historic documents reinforce Jicarilla concepts and cosmologies and help to establish some of the likely locations of archaeological sites. These documents also reveal a long and complex history of Jicarilla settlement in the region. Up until the 1700s, Jicarilla occupation of the Taos and Picurís areas was seasonal but regular, involving large trading caravans from neighboring territories extending to the west, north, and east. These Jicarilla bands over-wintered at Taos and Picurís Pueblos, and were a regular feature of the social landscape for five centuries (Eiselt 2006).

The earliest reports of the Taos Apaches include groups that would later be known as the Jicarillas. In 1625 Benavides described the territories of the Quinías and Manansas as extending some 50 leagues to the east of the Navajo, on the west side of the Río Grande along the Chama River and 10 leagues "inland" (east) of Taos (Ayer 1965:41; D. Gunnerson 1974:78; Schroeder 1974:253). A short-lived mission was established for them in 1627, probably somewhere in the vicinity of their major settlements in northeastern New Mexico. The Achos and Río Colorados of the 1680s as well as the Jicarillas may have been one and the same with the Quinías and Manansas of Benavides time (Gunnerson 1974:91). The Achos were first mentioned in 1646 and were the only Apache group identified by name in the Pueblo Revolt. The Achos, along with their Taos and Picurís allies, led the battle in Santa Fe and after the Spanish were defeated, the Achos followed the retreating caravans to El Paso to ensure their departure. The Río Colorados were mentioned with increasing frequency during the Spanish Reconquest in the 1690s. Dolores Gunnerson (1974:119) argues that the Río Colorados may have shared the Red River Country north of Taos with the Achos. Their name may have been an alternate title for the Achos used to indicate geographic location, or the Río Colorado Apaches may have been a specific division of a larger group called Achos. Var-

gas was told by his interpreters that the mountains that ran along the edge of the Red River were inhabited by the Achos during his 1694 campaign to reduce Taos Pueblo after the Reconquest. Soon after this, the Spanish began to refer to all of these bands as *Xicarillas* after the province they inhabited in northeastern New Mexico. *La Xicarilla* quickly became important as the last line of defense for the Spanish against Comanche and Ute raiders, who, backed by French arms, threatened the northern frontier.

Widespread dislocation of Plains Apache groups accompanied this expansion. Refugee populations coalesced in *La Xicarilla* from points west, north, and east in 1695, and for a time between 1704 and 1722, *La Xicarilla* was a temporary stopping point for nearly all of these refugee groups. Apaches from the Texas panhandle were pushed into *La Xicarilla* by the Caddoans, the Achos and Río Colorados fled their mountain strongholds on the heels of Ute aggression, and the Plains Apaches from *El Cuartelejo* abandoned their camps in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Colorado due to Comanche raids. Some of these bands remained with the Jicarilla, while others moved to Pecos and southern New Mexico where they were allied with the Faraon (proto-Mescalero) and Lipan. These refugee Plains Apaches later became the Llanero division of the Jicarilla after rejoining their kinsmen at Taos (Gunnerson 1974:171).

Because of these ongoing hostilities and threats to *La Xicarilla* by the Comanches, the Jicarillas and some of the refugees from *El Cuartelejo* agreed to be baptized, settle into pueblos, and accept an *alcalde mayor* and mission in 1723, thus becoming Spanish subjects legally entitled to the protection of Spanish military forces (Gunnerson 1974:199). By the following year, most of the *La Xicarilla* Apaches had moved into the colony at Taos (Gunnerson 1974:203; Jenkins 1966:97; Thomas 1935:208). This event marks the beginning of an encapsulated or enclave Jicarilla population in the northern Río Grande. Best thought of as a confederacy made up of previously autonomous Jicarilla and Plains Apache tribes, the Jicarilla enclave was organized into two territorial moieties: the Ollero, or white clan, maintained farms within the colony at Taos and the Llanero, or red clan, who after living for a time among the Mescalero, returned to the plains of northeastern New Mexico. The encapsulated component of the Jicarilla enclave was the Ollero band who served the colony as guides, guards, and spies. The Olleros were the descendents of the earliest Taos Apaches who occupied *La Xicarilla* and the Red River area above Taos.

The Olleros never experienced forced resettlement, but instead maintained their own autonomous villages and local group districts within communal and public lands near Hispanic and Pueblo grants. During the initial colonization of the Taos area, they located their villages and camps along the northern slope of Picurís Mountain from the Arroyo Hondo east to the Río Grande del Rancho and its tributaries (See Woosley and Olinger 1990:356-357). The western end of this area encompassed the Cristóbal de la Serna Grant. This grant had been recently purchased by Diego Romero of Servietta, a self-described "coyote" who had moved his family to Taos in 1714 and quickly began to accumulate wealth and prestige as one of the first Spanish settlers to the area following the Reconquest. He settled on the northern boundary of his grant near the Rio de Don Fernando in 1722 and his son, Francisco Xavier Romero (alias El Talache or the mattock) later established his hacienda, "Talachia", along the Rio de las Trampas near the Apache settlements (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:13).

Jicarilla involvement with the Romero clan was complex and involved everything from economic to religious entanglements in addition to a few nefarious court cases. In 1719 and 1722, Diego Romero stood as godfather to Apaches baptized at the Taos Mission, and in 1731, the Jicarilla were implicated in a complaint by the Pueblo of Taos to the Spanish governor concerning livestock theft by the family. A later case

involved rumors of adultery with a Jicarilla woman. The Romeros' ecclesiastical efforts balanced their checkered legal background. The family was instrumental in the Church's early conversion efforts of the Apaches. They helped Fray Juan José Peréz de Mirabal build the first Jicarilla mission in 1723, which local residents suggest was somewhere in the vicinity of Llano Quemado, either at the site of *Nuestra Senora del Carmel*, or across State Road 68 in a nearby field (see also Gunnerson 1974:216-219); or, as others believe, on the west side of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza.

In 1734, 10 years later, the Jicarilla mission supported about 130 Apaches as well as the Romero family. In 1738, Bishop Crespo noted that "tame" Apaches were still living in the area and attending services, but by 1744 the missionary efforts had largely failed (Gunnerson 1974:216). Baptismal records nonetheless show that 81 percent of the 900 Apache baptisms recorded during the 1700s took place during the 1720s to the 1750s (Brugge 1985:22-23; see also Brooks 2002:146), with many of them likely originating at the Mission.

By the 1760s, the Taos Olleros were divided into two local bands. The first of these was at Las Trampas, where the Apaches were reported some 40 years earlier. Bishop Tamarón made note of encampments of "peaceful" Apaches on the road from Picurís to Taos in the vicinity of Las Trampas in 1760, and a census of New Mexico taken five years later indicates that 25 "unconverted" families (about 100 people) lived in this area under the jurisdiction of the governor of Taos (Cutter 1975:350). The second band was located in the vicinity of Cieneguilla (present day Pilar) or La Hoya (known today as Velarde). In 1766, the *mestizo* servant of Angela Martín killed a Jicarilla man named El Chimayó. El Chimayó was described as a loyal servant of the Crown who had gone on numerous expeditions against the Comanche (Gunnerson 1974:241). His ranchería was located within a few miles of La Hoya, either one league north on the Río Grande in the vicinity of Cieneguilla or west along the Arroyo Ocole. These areas were situated within the Sebastian Martin grant, established in 1712. Documents pertaining to this case show that the Jicarilla of La Hoya, like those at Taos, were closely involved with the local residents, visiting them often, staying in their houses, and hiring their servants for various kinds of labor.

At some point between the 1760s and 1770s, one of the two groups (possibly the Las Trampas band) left the area to take up residence with the Utes in the San Juan Mountains (Gunnerson 1974:250-251). By this time, the Ute and Comanche alliance was broken, and the Apaches increasingly paired up with their Ute friends in retaliatory raids against tribes that were still hostile to the Crown. The Jicarillas were reported with the Utes north of Taos in 1779 and assisted Juan Bautista de Anza in his final defeat of the Comanche soon after. In 1818 they were found again with the Utes west of the Río Grande by Americans traveling through the area (Thomas 1929). After the 1840s, they were regularly reported in the Tusas Range and Chama Valley region. Referred to as the *Dachizhozhin* or *Nachizhozihn* this group of so-called "renegades" maintained a headquarters north of El Rito throughout the remainder of the historic period. In the middle of the nineteenth century, they were led by a man named Panteleón who was identified as a principal leader of the Olleros after 1840.

The La Hoya group, later known as the *Saitinde* maintained their camps in the vicinity of Cieneguilla until the middle of the nineteenth century. Early information regarding these Apaches comes from Hispanic land grants dating to the period.[3] In 1795 Governor Fernando Chacón made a community grant to 20 petitioners of a tract of land bordering the Río Grande above the Sebastian Martin grant. Grant boundaries extended northwest from Cieneguilla to the summit of Picurís Mountain and the Rio Hondo. Although no prior mention of Jicarilla occupation was made at the time of the original petition, the Jicarilla chief Espilin claimed that the Cieneguilla town site was the location

of his group's farming villages. In 1822 Espilin petitioned and was granted permission to reside with the settlers by Governor Fecundo Melgares. A report by the settlers protesting the Jicarilla request admitted that they had planted small pieces of land at Cieneguilla prior to making the grant, but that they had no legal claim to the land following the conquest of New Mexico by Juan de Oñate. To support their case, the settlers complained of various acts of violence and other injuries committed by Espilin's group in league with the Llaneros, who by 1801 and after a protracted chase in the Picurís mountains by Spanish forces, had re-established themselves in northeastern New Mexico under the protection of the Crown.[4]

Implicated in some of the attacks committed by Espilin's band was a man named Captain Francisco who was accused of killing cattle. In an earlier 1818 document, Francisco was listed as a "chief" of the Jicarilla who was involved in a possible uprising stemming from the murder of several Jicarilla by the residents of Taos. This person was probably none other than Francisco Chacon, a famous leader of the Olleros during the 1840s and 1850s. Apparently, the Jicarilla lost their legal battle for Cieneguilla, for in May of 1849, Chacon and his extended family of 16 lodges was found by Sergeant James A. Bally of the U.S. First Dragoons camped at the edge of the Cieneguilla land grant in the vicinity of the Agua Caliente near the northwest corner of the present Picurís Pueblo boundary. A related camp of 30 lodges, also led by Chacon, was located near Ojo Sarco south of Picurís. The total number of individuals in both bands was in excess of 100 people. Bally was concerned that the Picurís Olleros were involved in "depredations" then being committed by their Llanero kinsmen in league with Hispanic rebels at Mora following the Taos Revolt of 1847 (Bender 1974:21).

Hostilities and outbursts by the Llanero continued along the Santa Fe Trail and Las Vegas until 1854 when the Americans finally declared war on the Jicarilla. Although there is no evidence that Chacon's band was involved in any of these raids on the plains, they soon found their Agua Caliente camps under siege by the First Dragoons from Cantonment Burgwin. In the ensuing battle, 22 soldiers were killed, another 23 were wounded, and 45 horses were lost. This resounding defeat led to the closure of Cantonment Burgwin and ultimately to the resettlement of Chacon's band of Olleros west of the Rio Grande following their surrender several months later. Despite the best efforts of their agents, however, the Jicarilla continued to be regular visitors to the Taos valley. An 1858 memo by Kit Carson reported that the residents assisted the Jicarilla "by purchasing their earthen ware, willow baskets and paying for their labor" (Bender 1974:70), and in October of 1867, the Indian agent for the Jicarilla Apaches, William E. M. Arny, reported that the *Saitinde* of Abiquiú included some families who had just returned from La Junta (near Picurís) where they were involved in making pottery for trade with the Mexicans (Garland Publishing, Inc. 1974:205).

These and other historic documents demonstrate that the Jicarilla presence in the Taos area was complex and long-lasting. Permanent occupation spanned over 130 years, from 1722 until 1853. During the mid-1700s, the Jicarilla enclave constituted around 15 percent of the total population although their numbers probably never got above 200 permanent residents. On numerous occasions the Jicarilla assisted their friends and allies, joining forces in the Pueblo Rebellion against the Spanish and later in the 1847 Taos Rebellion against the Americans. They facilitated several spectacular escapes from Taos and Picurís when rebels in these Pueblos sought protection from Spanish abuses, and they defended their Spanish neighbors from Ute and Comanche attacks. During the initial phases of their settlement in the Taos region, the Jicarilla were involved with the Romero clan and other Hispanic villagers in the Ranchos de Taos area, establishing camps along the Río de las Trampas and Río Chiquito by 1722. After the break-up of the Comanche and Ute alliance and the movement of the

Llaneros back to *La Xicarilla*, the Taos contingent appears to have split up, with some of them moving to the San Juan Mountains, while still others shifted their settlements closer to modern day Pilar and Velarde. Upon loosing their bid to occupy the Cieneguilla land grant, the Olleros moved closer to Picurís Pueblo and Ojo Sarco where they were found by American forces in the 1840s. As noted above, this area in turn became the site of one of the most decisive Indian victories in the history of American occupation of New Mexico.

The Jicarilla were important to the local barter and exchange economy of Taos as well and were critical to the survival of small land holdings and villages. This is evident in historic documents, settlement pattern, and material culture. Settlements were located on the fringes of or within the communal portions of major land grants and also along major commercial routes, either the Camino Real through Taos or near the Apodaca and related trails leading into the valley. The economy was focused primarily on exchange with the Pueblos and Hispanic villages in addition to sheep herding and farming on Hispanic ranches and in plots of unclaimed lands in tributary streams. The archaeological expression of Jicarilla occupation of the Taos area is known only superficially but includes evidence for farming, hunting, pottery manufacturing, and trade.

JICARILLA ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE TAOS REGION

In 2007, the Southern Methodist University (SMU), Department of Anthropology initiated a multi-year archaeological research program focused on the history and environments of the Taos area. Supported in part by the SMU-in-Taos Fort Burgwin archaeological field school, this program uses archaeological data, historical documents, and ethnographic information to investigate the multi-ethnic history of Taos, the evolution of Hispano society, and issues of power and identity in the colonial frontier. A major goal of the research is to expand our understanding of the Jicarilla Apache occupation of the area, specifically the emergence of the Jicarilla Apache enclave in the Taos area and its subsequent development leading up to U.S. control. This focus on the Apaches fills an important gap in our understanding of Taos history and the hidden influences of Jicarilla culture in historical narratives of the region. It also fills an important gap in our understanding of Jicarilla society. I have argued elsewhere that the emergence of the Jicarilla enclave was a major turning point in their history (Eiselt 2006). Ethnohistoric records and archaeological evidence suggest that enclavement was a sophisticated political strategy with roots in the diplomatic ties and relationships stemming from Plains-Pueblo interactions that later became the basis of their moiety system. This strategy enabled the Jicarilla to retain and even elevate key aspects of their economy and society and to rapidly adjust to the unfolding conditions of contact.

The enclave archaeology project for the Jicarilla investigates these political and social strategies as extensions of earlier patterns of Plains-Pueblo trade and associated social connections. A second goal is to investigate Jicarilla land use and ceramic production in relation to Hispanic settlement and village economy. Patterns of exchange between women and the barter network of the region is a major focus of this research. This work includes non-destructive survey and mapping of Jicarilla sites, and documentation of Jicarilla trade and ceramic manufacturing through excavations at Hispanic archaeological sites and geochemical analysis of pottery sherds. Research at Taos is a continuation of earlier work in the Chama Valley (Eiselt 2006). The Chama Valley research documented key aspects of the Ollero enclave after these bands were moved to their agency at Abiquiú.

Jicarilla research at Taos also builds upon earlier studies conducted by Southern Methodist University. During the 1980s Ann Woosley and Jeffrey Girard recorded 93 archaeological sites containing micaceous pottery that may be attributed to the Apaches (see Girard 1988; Woosley and Olinger 1990) (Figure 1).

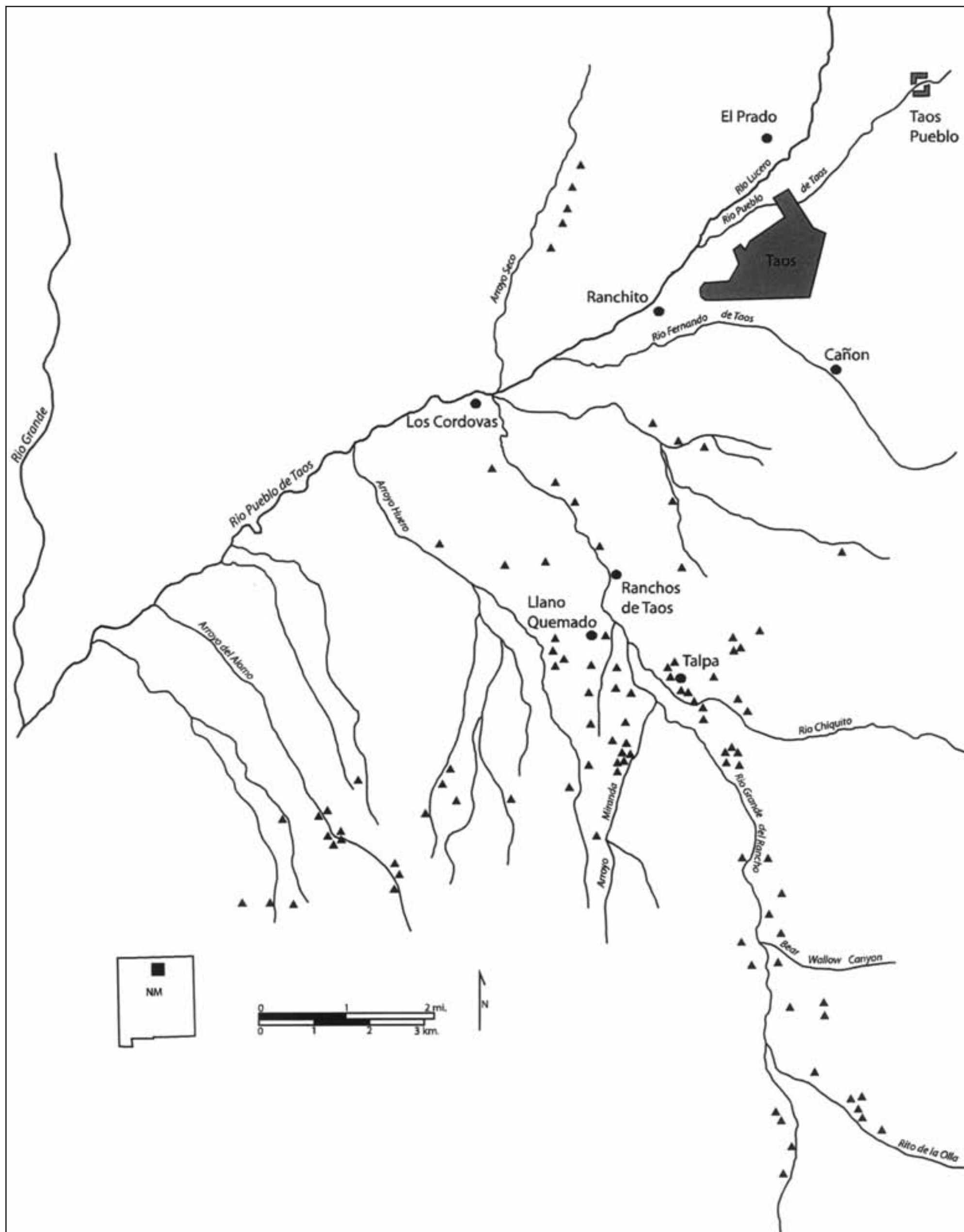

Figure 1.
Map showing distribution of possible Jicarilla Apache archaeological sites recorded by Anne Woosley and Jeffrey Girard (adapted from Woosley and Olinger 1990).

These sites also contain historic Pueblo ceramics, lithic tools and debris, metal arrow points, rock rings, and clusters of rock piles. Chemical analysis of ceramics revealed a broad signature likely representing multiple clay sources. As demonstrated in the Chama Valley, the pattern of clay-source utilization is consistent with an itinerant pottery producing tradition where raw clay was transported with the aid of the horse (Eiselt 2006). The locations of Taos valley Apache sites also are consistent with our findings in the Chama Valley and elsewhere. They are situated on exposed ridges above open grazing lands, and in upland settings with good vantage points and good access to permanent streams or intermittently flowing drainages. Moreover, these sites appear to be located in the communal portions of land grants and in public lands between grants, as in the Chama.

The Woosley surveys were well-situated to locate early Apache sites along the northern slopes of the Picurís

Mountains and in the tributary drainages of the Río del las Trampas (Río Grande del Rancho). Many of these sites probably date to the late colonial period, although subsequent survey by SMU has identified nineteenth-century camps and occupations dating to the establishment of Cantonment Burgwin. All of these sites are currently being revisited and documented with the goal of establishing additional identifying characteristics of sites and dateable assemblages. Survey collections also are being re-examined for their potential inclusion in an expanded geochemical study that includes historic Pueblo plainware ceramics and additional clay source survey. Ceramics from our excavations at the Ranchos de Taos Plaza are included. These pottery collections represent Hispanic consumer assemblages. Most of the ceramics recovered so far are Indian made and nearly 50 percent of the micaceous ceramic rim fragments can be attributed to the Jicarilla. Additional evidence for trade with the Apaches includes a single metal arrow point. With input from Picurís Pueblo, we hope to re-examine Herbert Dick's collections from the historic pueblo that are currently housed at Fort Burgwin. This collection would help us to understand additional aspects of trade with Pueblo people that complements our work on the plaza. Initial examination of the collection revealed numerous Jicarilla micaceous ceramics including Ocate and Cimarron Micaceous types (Eiselt 2006).

Finally, we are interested in mapping the cognitive and cultural landscape of the Jicarilla through the development of a comprehensive rock art recording project. Our rock art study focuses on survey and documentation of archaeological sites on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) property east of Rinconada and Pilar where late eighteenth-century Jicarilla camps are reported in historical documents. Volunteers working for BLM already have recorded possible Apache rock art in this area, and additional work by SMU in 2007 identified tipi ring encampments that appear to predate the nineteenth century. We also have recorded possible Jicarilla rock art in the Rio Grande gorge in the vicinity of the rolling rock shrine mentioned above. This work is currently being expanded by Severin Fowles of Barnard College. Although at this time we cannot eliminate Ute or Comanche origins for the rock art, site distributions are nonetheless concentrated in areas of known Jicarilla settlement. Rock art themes, motifs, and techniques are distinctive and include horses and battle scenes, tipis and tipi camps, and parfleches with geometric designs (Figure 2). Earlier motifs tend to be pecked and abraded, whereas later motifs are scratched, probably with metal tools. Jicarilla rock art documents, in part, their perceptions and responses to state domination and religious conversion.

In sum, our Jicarilla archaeology program is currently focused on site documentation and inventory of known and possible Apache sites using non-destructive pedestrian survey and collections analysis. This research will help us to develop a better understanding of Jicarilla site structure and site contents, the distribution of sites, and chronological indicators of settlement. Evidence for trade and other aspects of the economy also are being recorded. Survey is located in areas of known Jicarilla settlement, much of which is on BLM land. Ongoing research not only assists the BLM in achieving some of its management objectives, but also promises to expand our appreciation of Jicarilla society and archaeology while contributing to a broader research agenda on the multi-ethnic history of the region. The emergence and development of the Jicarilla enclave is a major focus of research that examines settlement, economy, landscape ideology, and other social interactions with settled villages and American military forces.

CONCLUSION

The Jicarilla Apaches helped to shape the history of the Taos region and they consider this area the center of their world. The adventures and exploits of their most important culture heroes took place here and are recorded in the stunning landscapes and natural wonders that attract thousands of tourists each year. Their sacred sites and holy places speak to a hidden history that is easily overlooked by residents and archaeologists even though they are an important component of Jicarilla religious practice today. Apaches were regular visitors to the valley during the initial phases of Spanish contact and they assisted their Pueblo allies in resisting Spanish authority during the 1600s, but permanent settlement of the area really begins with the establishment of the Jicarilla enclave in 1722. This occupation was significant and long-lasting. Major villages were located at Las Trampas and Cieneguilla where the population was relatively large. Hundreds of individuals, most of them Olleros, lived in scattered camps in these and other locations until the mid-1850s. The 130-year occupation of the Taos area is reflected in the archaeology of the region, and previous and ongoing survey demonstrates this, although more work is needed to document the distinctive aspects of the Jicarilla record and establish good settlement chronologies.

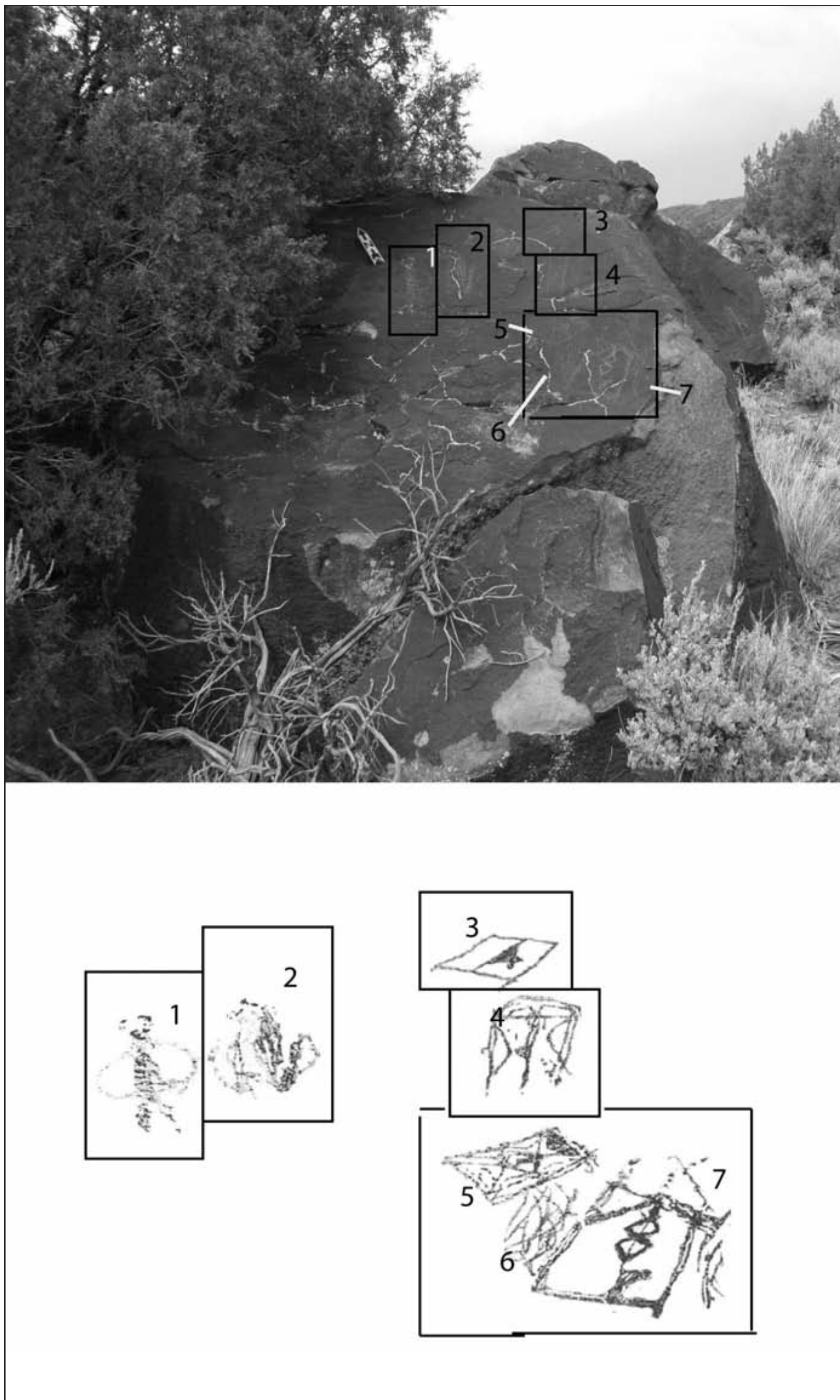

Figure 2.
Example of possible late-period Jicarilla Apache rock art in the Rio Grande Gorge. Elements 3 through 7 represent parfleches with geometric designs that are scratched into the patina of a basalt boulder in the gorge. Elements 1 and 2 appear to be Archaic in origin.

The SMU-in-Taos archaeological research program seeks to expand our understanding of Jicarilla history and the role of the Jicarilla enclave in sustaining local economies and villages through trade and mutual defense. This multi-year and interdisciplinary project would not be possible without the help and support of Paul Williams, and our efforts are aimed a developing the type of archaeology that exemplifies his characteristic dedication to the region. Our vision, based on his example, brings together the resources of university faculty and students, community leaders, private land owners, and local, state, and federal government agencies to preserve and elevate Taos heritage and culture. Although this review has focused primarily on the Apaches, archaeological programming is broadly conceived to incorporate Hispano, Pueblo, and Anglo histories as well through community-based research and education in the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and neighboring communities and schools. Like Paul, we believe that cultural heritage research has a positive role to play in these communities and that local scholars and residents are vital partners in these efforts. They help set the agenda for our research and constitute some of our most enthusiastic supporters. Currently at SMU, we are benefiting from Paul Williams' "army of volunteers" as they are sometimes called, and look forward to working with them more in the future on this and other related heritage projects.

ENDNOTES

1. Other versions state that White Shell Woman was the mother of Killer-of-the-Enemies and that White Painted woman gave birth to Child-of-the-Water (Opler 1938:58). These two women were either sisters or mother and daughter (Goddard 1911:196), but were frequently referred to as grandmother in nearly all cases of the story.

2. Residents of Taos Pueblo and Ranchos de Taos have used this source until recently for white-washing the interiors of adobe houses. The sparkling white clay is applied to the interior walls for decoration.

3. See SANM, Santa Fe, Spanish Archives, 1621–1821, roll 19, fr. 153–154.

4. Documents dating from the early 1800s reveal some of the emerging tensions between local residents and their Ollero neighbors following the return of these once hostile bands. Seeking protection from the Comanches, the Llaneros sought and won the assistance of their Apache relatives at Taos, eventually settling in northeastern New Mexico where they remained until the 1880s. After this point, the Llaneros were more closely affiliated with Taos Pueblo and the Olleros with Picurís (Parsons 1936:12).

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