

Raíces Taoseños: History and Archaeology of the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish

Preliminary Research Design and General Work Plan for the 2007

Field Season SMU-in-Taos Field School

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A Proposed Partnership Between Southern Methodist University, Fort Burgwin Research Center and the Ranchos de Taos Community

Raices Taoseños is the preliminary title of a proposed collaborative project between the Ranchos de Taos Community and Southern Methodist University at the Fort Burgwin Research Center (SMU-in-Taos). The purpose of this project is to conduct community-based archaeological and ethnohistoric research within the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish and Ranchos de Taos Plaza over an initial period of three to five years using the archaeological field school program and local input.

The study encompasses the prehistoric and historical resources of the Rio Grande del Rancho watershed, which includes the Parish and multiple associated plazas and communities. We are interested in developing a broader understanding of this area and its people by working at several different levels of geographic inclusiveness. At the lowest level, we are interested in individual households and structures over time. This includes architectural and artifact studies and inventories at the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and surrounding communities and homesteads. At the next level, we wish to examine the spatial layout of houses and structures within and between communities over time; how they grew or evolved, and how they may have interacted. At the highest level, we are interested in examining the cultural and natural landscape of the Rio Grande del Rancho watershed, which includes roadways, trails, rock art, resource gathering areas, and other areas of cultural significance connecting villages and ranchos. This portion of the study involves reconstruction of local environments and ecologies over time. Finally, we are interested in the multi-ethnic history of the area leading up to the 20th-century. The temporal framework of the study encompasses prehistoric occupation of this area but focuses on the post-1700s Hispanic settlement and village life. Research is multidisciplinary and seeks to document and preserve archaeological materials and other areas of cultural significance. As such, excavation, which is intrusive and destructive, will be avoided as much as possible, with most activities focusing on non-intrusive pedestrian or surface survey including remote sensing, aerial photography, and historic maps. A major goal of the research is to use geospatial and geographic information systems (GIS) to build a comprehensive database of natural and cultural landscape features.

The second major feature of the project is that it is community-based. This means that we seek to include the Ranchos de Taos and Parish community at all levels of research in order to create a more culturally-sensitive and respectful interpretation of Parish history. The most important distinguishing characteristic of a community-based approach in archaeology is the relinquishing of at least partial control of a project to a local community so that they might have a larger voice in the creation of archaeological knowledge. This includes the use of archaeological research in the development of educational, heritage, and public outreach initiatives that benefit the community. One of the primary goals of a community-based approach is to establish partnerships with descendent communities so that they may guide and participate in the interpretation and presentation of archaeological materials.

Archaeology as a discipline is rapidly changing to become more responsive to local communities and stakeholders in the creation of knowledge about the past. These changes involve learning new social skills in addition to the traditional techniques employed to recover archaeological information. We therefore have two goals in seeking a partnership with the Ranchos de Taos community. Through collaboration, we hope to increase public awareness and appreciation of local culture and heritage. We also seek to teach our SMU-in-Taos students how to conduct respectful, and responsible research within the context of a living community and tradition.

Our Project Objectives are:

- To increase knowledge of traditional Ranchos de Taos heritage and culture through archaeological, archival, and oral history research
- To build a partnership between the Ranchos de Taos Community and SMU-in-Taos in establishing a multi-year, multidisciplinary research and educational program focused on the Plaza and surrounding areas.

- To educate the public about Community history and culture
- To train SMU students and Community members in archaeological field techniques and develop teaching materials for K-12 classrooms.
- To identify and record Hispanic archaeological sites on Land Grand, Federal, and State lands surrounding the Plaza for the purposes of protection and management.
- In partnership with The Community, to obtain sources of funding and other support for research and educational activities related to this project.

Public Outreach Objectives:

- Establishment of an informational web site documenting the progress of the project through photographs, journals, and reports containing non-sensitive research information approved by the Community
- Work with Community educators to develop K-12 learning opportunities through ongoing archaeological research on the Plaza. Possible projects include:
 - Traveling educational boxes that explore Ranchos heritage with hands-on activities that can be adjusted for students of many ages and activity cards designed to help teachers develop classroom projects
 - Archaeology for Youth activities that allow kids to excavate along side SMU-in-Taos college students in the Plaza, participate in Hispanic rock art recording activities on Federal and State lands in the Taos area, and process artifacts and information pertaining to ongoing archaeological research in laboratory settings.
 - The development of lectures and activities for K-12 classrooms

A number of these outreach objectives may be accomplished by working with Bureau of Land Management and the U. S. Forest Service, which already have educational and outreach programs that might be modified to include Hispanic heritage issues.

Research Design

The research designs and work will be developed in consultation with community leaders, private land owners, and administrative organizations. This includes the location and extent of excavations, the collection and curation of artifacts, site recording activities, confidentiality issues relating to the locations of sites, reporting protocols, and public outreach. In short, we seek to build meaningful partnerships with local scholars, descendant communities, and church officials who are interested in community heritage and its uses in educational realms.

Suitability and Relevance of the Project

The Ranchos de Taos Plaza and surrounding Parish is a community and cultural resource of significant value to our understanding of Taos Valley history and prehistory. Yet, very little archaeological research has been conducted in this area. Moreover, there have been no archaeological studies on the Ranchos de Taos Plaza, which still contains standing architecture and subsurface archaeological materials dating to the late 1700s. In 1967 George Wright, architect for the 1966-1967 refurbishing of the Saint Francis of Assisi church, lamented that archaeological research was not done in the Church prior to the laying of the concrete floor (Wright 1967), and Hooker and Santistevan later stated, "Before it is too late, a study of the church and the buildings forming the plaza that are still in use and those now in ruin to see what can be learned about what life was like in the plaza many years ago" (1996). Archaeological research, when combined with ethnohistory, documentary research, and oral testimony promises to reveal a great deal about unwritten aspects of this plaza and surrounding communities.

Southern Methodist University and its affiliated archaeologists are well-suited for this project. Sunday Eiselt is the director of the archaeology program in Taos and the SMU-in-Taos archaeology field school. She has been conducting historical archaeology research in northern New Mexico since 1998 and received her Ph.D. in

anthropology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in 2006. Her dissertation work focused on Colonial Period and 19th-century Jicarilla Apache and Hispanic archaeology in the Chama Valley, with a special emphasis on pottery analysis. Research at Taos is an extension of this work. Under Eiselt's close supervision, the SMU-in-Taos archaeological field school will conduct the majority of the work. The field school is a rigorous five week program that introduces students to basic archaeological methods such as survey, excavation, rock art recording, and collaboration with descendant communities. Over the next several years, Eiselt also will be assisted by Albert Gonzalez, an advanced archaeology graduate student at SMU-in-Taos with a Master of Arts in History from the University of Texas, Dallas. The focus of his M.A. thesis was the 20th-century history of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza. Mr. Gonzalez also has extensive training in computer database management and geospatial analysis and will be supervising field school students in an official capacity as a teaching assistant.

SMU-in-Taos has had an on-going research commitment to the prehistory and history of the Taos District for over four decades. Past SMU-related projects in the region, the majority of which have been undertaken as part of the SMU field school, include the long-term excavation program at the Late Coalition (AD 1250-1320) village of Pot Creek Pueblo (Adler 1994, 1995; Crown 1991; Crown and Kohler 1994; Fowles 2004a, 2004b, Wetherington 1968; Woosley 1980), smaller-scale excavations at a variety of Late Developmental and Early Coalition Period (AD 1000-1250) sites (Green 1976; Morenon 1976; Vickery 1969; Woosley 1980), synthesis of the Late Developmental through early Historic Period archaeology of Picuris Pueblo (Adler and Dick 1999; Adler 2002), as well as regional survey (Arbolino 2001, Herold 1968; Fowles 2004a; Quinn 1970; Woosley 1982, 1986). This research has resulted in a relatively detailed understanding of the evolution of Pueblo communities in the Taos District from the start of the 2nd millennium AD to the Spanish entrada.

As information on the Pueblo occupation of the region has accumulated, it has simultaneously served to highlight our lack of understanding of historic sequences and occupations including Pueblo, Apache, Hispanic, and later Anglo residents. Survey by the SMU field school during the 1980's documented historic sites along the northern slope of the Picuris Mountains (Girard 1986), and other cultural resources management (CRM) and historical and ethnohistorical projects further attest to a highly significant and intact archaeological record in this area. However, these sites have never been the focus of sustained archaeological research. Consequently, the hundreds of years of Colonial and Territorial occupation in the Taos District remain largely unknown.

One of the most important and long-lasting villages in this District is the Ranchos de Taos Plaza, which lies in the shadow of the Saint Francis of Assisi Church, thought to be one of the most photographed churches in the country. Since its initial listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, numerous books and articles have been written on the architecture and much has been said about the ritual art, dances, and music of the surrounding village (Hooker and Santistevan 1996). The distinctive Taoseño and complex culture that is captured tangentially in books, on canvas, and within the shutters of countless cameras is nearly inseparable in the public eye from the elegant simplicity of the adobe church and its buttressed walls.

Our awareness of the people of the Ranchos de Taos village has been elevated in recent years by the scholarly works of Sylvia Rodriguez and others who have described the Native American and Spanish customs in the village, the sacred qualities of church, village, and acequia life, and the burgeoning and sometimes debilitating effects of modern tourism on the plaza. This work has taken place in the context of growing interest in Hispano identity stemming from over four hundred years of Colonial and American domination of the region (Bustamante 1982; Brooks 2002; Frank 2000, Gutiérrez 1991; Weber 1996a, b; 1988).

Ethnographic and historical research enriches our understanding of modern Taoseño identity and is an indispensable source of information and inspiration for archaeology, but this picture is incomplete without reference to the rich body of knowledge, which lays unwritten in archaeological sites. We hope to address this issue through a multidisciplinary approach that combines oral history, archival research, and archaeological methods to deepen our understanding of the roots and development of Hispano and Indian heritage in the Saint Francis Parish and surrounding areas.

Project Location and Environmental Setting

The centerpiece of the project is the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and surrounding Saint Francis of Assisi Parish and Río Grande del Rancho watershed. The project universe therefore includes the boundaries of the Parish and surrounding areas including the middle reaches of the Río Chiquito and Río Grande del Rancho, the Cristobal de la Serna and Gijosa grants, and portions of the Río Grande Gorge surrounding Pilar and Cieneguilla. Archaeological research will focus on three broadly geographic scales; the village, the Parish (or multicomunity), and the southern Taos Basin region. This area includes lands that are currently under the jurisdiction of private owners, Land Grant consortia, Federal agencies, and State agencies. Some of the cultural resources that exist on these lands may include Hispanic rock art, religious shrines and *descansos*, cemeteries, *acequias* and other water control devices, grist or other mills, resource harvesting areas (e.g. mineral, clay, plant, and animal), footpaths and wagon roads, homesteads, agricultural fields, livestock pens, and shops or trading posts. Our plan is to consult with the appropriate individuals, agencies, and consortia to obtain access to (and necessary legal permits) to land and cultural resources that may be related to the current project as needed and as the project develops.

A primary focus of research is the evolution of historic land tenure and ecological practices related to subsistence farming and ranching in the Taos Basin. This basin, which is ecologically and geologically diverse, is confined by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on the south and east, and the San Juan Mountains to the west. The northern end of the basin extends into Colorado. The Río Grande bisects the valley and cuts deeply through a broad volcanic layer and associated basalt rock that have been used as the substrate to create stunning rock art images dating from the Archaic period up to the present. Seven major tributaries of the Río Grande drain from the Sangre de Crisos. These drainages have been the foundation of agriculture and farming practices for thousands of years leading up to the historic period. From north to south these tributaries include the Arroyo Hondo, Arroyo Seco, Río Lucero, Río Pueblo, Río Fernando, Río Chiquito, and the Río Grande del Rancho. On the western side of the basin, the Petaca Wash receives the waters of multiple tributaries heading up in the San Juan Mountains before it, in turn, connects to the Río Grande.

High alpine mountains and mountain valleys surround the central flood plain of the Taos Basin. Elevations range from 5,900 feet on the valley floor to more than 11,500 feet in the surrounding mountains. The region is further subdivided into vertical biotic zones that are the result of differences in temperature, pressure, and precipitation (Bailey 1913). Biotic life-zones range from the Canadian at the highest mountain peaks to the Upper Sonoran in the lower valleys.

Variability in the carrying capacity of these different zones has exerted incredible influence on Hispanic and Pueblo economy during the historic period. Early frosts, unpredictable rainfall, and the rugged terrain of the mountains limited the agricultural potential of valleys and made sheep herding a viable economic alternative in the mountains. Stock grazing was carried out through vertical transhumance. Despite these semi-arid and rugged environs, the region has supported settled agricultural communities for thousands of years. During the historic period the scores of valleys, watersheds, and canyons making up the Taos Basin delimited local territories, conditioned land tenure practice, and defined spheres of land ownership and community interaction (Rodríguez 1987, 2006). The remote frontier setting of the Taos Basin and environmental limitations placed on the growing season also have made interethnic exchange a requirement and a hallmark of survival for Taos residents.

A Brief History of Ranchos de Taos

The Pre-Contact Period

The Ranchos de Taos Plaza has a long history that stretches back to the early 1700s and possibly earlier to Spanish contact or pre-contact times. This history has always involved multiethnic and mixed communities of settlers and Indians that interacted closely for economic and defensive purposes. The frontier and interethnic character of this small colony also spawned numerous rebellions and fostere

d the development of a distinctive creole culture and identity that can still be witnessed today. Before the Spanish came, however, Pueblo people held sway over the valley, and before this, Archaic hunter-gatherers inhabited the area starting between 6000 B.C. and 750 B.C. The Puebloan northern Tiwa (Taos and Picuris) likely migrated from the four corners region around A.D. 1000, setting up scattered pithouses and pueblos along the upper and lower reaches of the Río Grande del Rancho and Río Chiquito.¹ Harrington (1916:186) was the first Anthropologist to note the presence of Pueblo ruins in the vicinity of the Ranchos de Taos plaza, and a Smithsonian investigation led by J. A. Jeançon uncovered the prehistoric Llano Site a mile south on the Llano Quemado ridge (Jeançon 1929). By around A.D. 1400, however, Pueblo villagers had moved to their current location just south of the Río Pueblo de Taos and by around A. D. 1540 Taos Pueblo had grown into one of the largest multi-storied villages in the northern Río Grande with an estimated population in excess of 2,000 people. From A.D. 1500 on, ancestors of the Apaches, Navajo, and Utes traded, over-wintered, and raided at Taos Pueblo.

Spanish Contact Prior to 1680

The first Europeans to appear in Taos valley were led by Captain Alvarado, who was exploring the area for the Coronado expedition of 1540. First called Braba and then Valledolid, the name of the pueblo was later changed to Taos by early Spanish settlers. Although the origin of the name is debated, T. M. Pearce (1965) believed it to be an approximation of the Tiwa words *Tu-o-ta* "Red Willow Place" or *Tua-Tah* "down at the village". The terms are disputed by some contemporary residents. Historically, Taos Pueblo was referred to in their language as, "the place at Red Willow Canyon" (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:11). Don Juan de Oñate, official colonizer of the province of *Nuevo México*, was next to arrive in the valley in July 1598. In September of that same year he assigned Fray Francisco de Zamora to serve the Taos and Picuris Indians along with their Apache neighbors, and the first mission was completed around 1610. The chief goal of this mission was to perform the sacraments and introduce the Indians to the fundamentals of Christian doctrine by the establishment of schools for instruction in reading writing, music, arts, agricultural practices, and methods of masonry, carpentry, iron work, weaving, and dying. However, the early efforts of the mission at Taos were not very successful. Hostilities to Spanish domination occurred throughout the first decades of the 17th-century, with open rebellion in 1613 and again in 1640. In 1640, Taos Indians killed their priest, Fray Pedro de Miranda, and other Spaniards in the vicinity, destroyed the church and fled north to the Cuarteljo Apaches for several years.

Spanish settlers and *encomenderos* originally lived on the outskirts of the pueblo, but the Indians finally persuaded them to move several leagues to the south a few years later. This area would become known as San Fernando de Taos, and later simply Taos. Spanish settlement also proceeded in the vicinity of the Río de las Trampas, which later became known as Las Trampas (literally, the traps for the number of beaver traps set in the nearby river) and after the Comanche raids of the 1770s, El Rancho de Nuestro Padre San Francisco del Río de las Trampas, the Plaza de San Francisco, Ranchos de Taos, or simply "El Rancho". After the plaza was completed in the 1780s, the term "el puesto" (the outpost) was often added, indicating the quasi-military or defensive function of the plaza (Wroth 1979 as cited in Hooker and Santistevan 1996:11). In the 1665 will of Francisco Xavier Romero it is called "este paraje de san Francisco de las Trampas in la Jurisdicción del Valley de San Gerónimo de Thaos (this place of San Francisco de las Trampas in the jurisdiction of the Valley of San Gerónimo de Taos) (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:11). Today, the Ranchos de Taos Plaza is the mother community of the Saint Francis de Assisi Parish and Río Grande del Rancho Watershed, which includes five distinct communities (Ranchos de Taos, Los Córdovas, Cordillera, Talpa, and Llano Quemado) and multiple *acequias* and churches.

¹ The span of human occupation in and around Ranchos de Taos actually stretches well before this into the early Archaic period (7000 B.C.) and possibly even the Paleoindian period (9000-7000 B.C) based on isolated finds of Folsom points in the region. However, we know little of the occupational history of Paleoindian and Archaic populations other than the fact that their distinctive stone tools are often found scattered across the landscape. We know a great deal more about the later prehistoric occupation of the area,, and precious little about the early historic (post-1539 A.D.) occupations

Long established trading networks at Taos Pueblo, plus its mission and the abundant water and timber of the valley attracted early Spanish settlers, but life was not easy for the newcomers and they relied heavily on Indian food and labor. This reliance came at a price. Resentments over the attempts by religious authorities to quash native rites, and the demands by *encomenderos* for tribute caused periodic and often fatal hostilities leading up to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Years of famine and pestilence, corruption, the suppression of religion, and high taxes, combined with the destruction of the economy through slave raiding, had taken its toll. Moreover, the multiple slave expeditions and Spanish forays to the plains demonstrated to Taos that they could no longer ensure the safety of their Apache trading partners or count on hinterland Apache strongholds for refuge. The seeds of insurgency were sown and one by one the Pueblos joined forces in an unprecedented show of unanimity. Planned under the covert protection of Taos by the rebel leader Popé, the Pueblo Rebellion resulted in the temporary expulsion of the Spanish from New Mexico until 1692.

The Spaniards at Taos were not spared. Some seventy settlers as well as the priests, Antonio de Mora and Juan de la Pedrosa were killed, but Don Fernando Durán y Chávez and his son Cristóbal, who owned a hacienda near the Río de las Trampas, somehow managed to escape (Jenkins 1966:89). Soon after the death of Popé in 1688, Don Diego de Vargas made a successful military reconquest of the region. In 1693, he had managed to recolonize most of the province by turning the pueblos and their Apache allies against one another, but Taos remained unified and rebellious. In 1694 de Vargas raided the Pueblo when it refused to provide corn to settlers in Santa Fe, and resistance continued on this northern outpost up until 1696. Even though the mission was quickly re-established once the reconquest was complete, it was some time before Spanish settlers returned to the valley.

Vecino Settlement Post-1680

Approximately fifteen years later, the issuance of new land grants brought about the first stages of the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish and Ranchos de Taos. On April 8, 1710, the lands formerly held by Durán y Chávez were granted to Cristobal de la Serna. However, he never took possession of the grant due to military service.² Another fourteen years passed before Juan and Sebastian de la Serna (sons of Cristobal de la Serna) sold the grant to Diego Romero, a mestizo who had had resided in the area for approximately ten years. The entry of the Romeros marks the beginning of resettlement of the Río de las Trampas. Romero was the son of Alonso Cadimo and an Indian woman named María Tapia who withdrew with the rest of the Spanish settlers to El Paso following the Pueblo Revolt. Both were the servants of the hacienda of Felipe Romero at Servietta south of Santa Fe (Chavez 1954:272). Upon being freed from servitude Diego took the name of his patron, whatever inheritance he received, and moved his wife and three children to Taos. By August 20, 1714 he had registered a livestock brand and was accumulating both property and wealth. Romero identified himself as a “coyote” in the brand registration. The Romero clan grew in the following years with the arrival of his sister, her soldier husband Juan de Villalpando, and their large family in Las Trampas. Diego Romero settled on the northern boundary of the grant near the Río de Don Fernando. His son, Francisco Xavier Romeo (alias El Talache or the mattock) was probably the first settler on the Río de las Trampas, establishing his hacienda, “Talachia” there in the 1730s (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:13). Certain clans of the Taos Indians also continued to use this area for farming and ranching during the colonial era (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:13).

The Jicarilla Apache Community after 1700

The western Jicarilla, or Olleros, also settled along the Río de las Trampas between 1722 and 1727 as the result of Comanche raiding in northeastern New Mexico and the Plains (Gunnerson 1974:203; Jenkins 1966:97). Jicarilla villages were distributed along the northern slope of Picuris Mountain from the Arroyo Hondo east to the Río Grande del Rancho and its tributaries as far south as the Rito de la Olla or Pot Creek (See Woosley and Olinger

² This land was bounded by: “the middle road to Picuris on the west; the ojo caliente on the east, the old monument on the north, and the [Picuris] mountain of the south” (Jenkins 1966:91).

1990:356-357). The western end of this area encompassed the Romero lands near Las Trampas. The Romeros were intimately involved with the Jicarillas from the beginning. In 1719 and again in 1722, Diego 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 Romeros.

Around 1723, Fray Juan José Pérez de Mirabal initiated the construction of a church at or near the Romero grant to serve the Jicarilla community (Gunnerson 1974:216-219). The present location of this mission is unknown, but it supported about 130 Apaches in 1734. This church also likely served the Romero clan since Diego Romero and his sons have been implicated in its building. In 1738 Bishop Crespo noted that "tame" Apaches were still living in the area, but by 1744 the missionary efforts had failed (Gunnerson 1974:216). Although additional information about the movements of the Jicarilla during this time is scant, a good portion of the tribe remained at Taos through the rest of the century and presumably continued to use the mission, which likely served the growing Romero family.

It was around this same time that a royal decree established the annual trade fairs at Taos, Picurís, and Pecos Pueblos. The trade fairs, which took place in July and August, were strictly regulated, and were attended by Comanche, Ute, and Jicarilla and Plains Apaches. The decree was issued in response to reports that French traders from Louisiana were trading with southern plains tribes. The Taos trade fair drew the most attention because it was the one attended by the Comanches, but the paucity of records makes it impossible to calculate the volume of trade or assess the impact of the fair on the regional economy (Simmons 2001:16).

Establishment of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza

Starting in the 1740s and certainly by the 1760s, the Río de las Trampas area began to take on the basic outlines of a large, dispersed settlement with scattered ranchos and homesteads, mostly consisting of the Romero family and their Apache friends. When Fray Miguel De Menchero made his report of his 1744 Visitation of Missions, he spoke of four ranches in the Taos Valley, with ten Spanish families. Other than Taos Pueblo, the only inhabited site appears to have been the Romero settlement on the Río de la Trampas. Bishop Pedro Tamarón likewise made note of encampments of "peaceful" Apaches on the road from Picurís to Taos in the Río de las Trampas in 1760, and he described the home of a wealthy Taos Indian on the Río de las Trampas stating, "the said house is well walled in, with arms and towers for defense" (Jenkins 1966:98). The Taos Indian resident is unknown, but he must have been married into or was some how part of the Romero family. Tamarón arrived in the area just prior to a deadly Comanche raid, which he witnessed and described. Many of the Spanish settlers caught in the attack took refuge in the Villalpando home, "a very large house, the greatest in all that valley". Since Villalpando was the nephew of Diego Romero, the attack was likely on the Río de las Trampas settlers (Jenkins 1966:98; Kessell 1979:393). It is unclear if the Jicarillas assisted in repelling the attack, but a census of New Mexico taken five years later indicates that twenty "unconverted" families (about 100 people) lived in this area under the jurisdiction of the governor of Taos, contributing "everything that is ordered of them by the Alcalde Mayor" (Cutter 1975:350). The same census indicates that the vecino population included 36 families of 160 people and that Taos Pueblo included 506 people, a precipitous drop from the earlier population of 2000.

Comanche raiding during the 1760s and 1770s ultimately led to the abandonment of the Las Trampas ranchos, at least temporarily, and also caused the original Jicarilla mission to fall into disuse. Families moved into Taos Pueblo for protection intermittently throughout this brief period while still continuing to tend their farms and undertake new construction to centralize and fortify a more defensible village. In 1776, Father Dominguez passed through the area on a mission inspection tour. Describing the "Trampas de Taos" (Ranchos de Taos), Father Dominguez stated,

"The settlement consists of scattered ranchos, and their owners are the citizens who live in the pueblo...It does not mean that they will always live here, but only until the plaza which is being built in the cañada where their families are is finished. This is being erected by order of the aforesaid governor...so that when they live together in this way, even though they are at a distance from the pueblo, they may be able to resist the attack the enemy may make."

The friar reckoned the population to be around 67 families or 306 persons. A portion of this population included *genízaros* and other mestizo or mixed-blood families such as the Romeros (Quintana 1991:31). *Genízaros* consisted mostly of detribalized Plains and Taos-Plains mixed-blood Indians (Hooker and Santistevan 1996:13). The coyote Romero families and several Spanish families rounded out this multicultural population.

Given that the church is a major ingredient of any Spanish plaza design, it is likely that Father Dominguez witnessed the first stirrings of the Saint Francis of Assisi church, which was first recorded in the diocesan headquarters in Durango soon after in 1772.³ Additional construction by the villagers during the 1780s led to the completion of the Ranchos de Taos Plaza or the Plaza de San Francisco as it was then known (Kubler 1990:103; Prince 1915:261). The church also may have been moved from some previous location where it served the Apaches to its current (more defensible) position at this time.

In 1782 Morfi (Thomas 1932:97) described the Plaza de San Francisco and church as a spacious quadri-lateral village that included a defensive wall and several towers (*torreons*).⁴ The enclosed houses were nearly finished in 1779 and most of the settlers had moved back into the area by the 1790s, a short time after the Comanches sued for peace in 1786. Morfi described abundant arable lands that were irrigated by the Río de las Trampas (Río Grande del Rancho) creek. A free-flowing spring of hot water also was noted.⁵ The Ranchos de Taos area was the most populated settlement at this time with 191 people.

Hooker and Santistevan (1996:15-16) provide an excellent interpretation of what the original plaza looked like (ca. 1815) based on early documents and descriptions of similar plazas.

The plaza was built in the form of a long rectangle with the long axis running northwest to southeast. It was a bout eight hundred feet long and four hundred feet wide. There were one- and two-story dwellings located on the perimeter to form the fortress-like exterior walls. Probably, some of these buildings did not abut their neighbors but were connected to the nearest houses by high, thick adobe walls. There were not windows or doors in the exterior walls so all coming and going had to be through two heavy wood gates located in the southeast and northwest plaza walls. The roofs of the buildings were flat, supported by vigas, and constructed in the customary way of the time...If the builders followed the governor's instructions there were embrasures in the connecting parapet walls which formed battlements between the towers...The defensive towers were made of adobe and were probably located at the four corners of the plaza, with one or two others in the middle of the long northeast and southwest walls.

Peace with the Comanches resulted in a dramatic growth in population during the 1790s and the establishment of several additional communities in the valley. Sixty-three families who had previously lived at the Río Pueblo de

³ Considerable debate continues to surround this church. Documents in Santa Fe contend that it wasn't until 1813 that the Cathedral Chapter of Durango gave permission for the erection of the church. In 1818, Father Benito Pereyro, the Franciscan padre at the Taos Pueblo Mission at the time, informed the chapter that he had completed the church. Other sources claim that the church was begun in 1710, 1778, or as late as 1810. Tree ring studies of the current Saint Francis de Asis church by Stallings (1937) indicate that construction dates to a slightly later date of 1816 +/- 10

⁴ In New Mexico at this time, the term plaza connoted the idea of a fortified place rather than a central square. By constructing contiguous houses about a central open area, windowless outside walls could serve as a defensive barrier with the center of the community accessible only by means of a wide double gate (Bunting 1964:3).

⁵ This spring is identified by Harrington (1916:186) and is known locally as the Ponce de León Hot Springs or the Taos Bathtub since many of the towns citizens journeyed there for baths before the area had plumbing.

Taos were placed in possession of the Don Fernando de Taos grant by Alcalde Antonio José Ortiz in 1796.⁶ The plaza of Don Fernando de Taos soon became the center of the valley's Hispanic life. Along the Río del Pueblo, sixty-one persons established the Plaza de la Purísima (Upper Ranchitos), and another sixty-three people lived at the Plaza de San Francisco de Paula (Lower Ranchitos). Eighty-six people lived to the southeast of Don Fernando at the Plaza de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores (Cañón), and eighty-three formed the neighborhood of La Loma (then the Plaza de Gertrudis) (Weber 1996:20). From a population of 308 people in 1789, the number of Hispanics in the Taos Valley had risen to 1783 by 1800 (as compared to around 500 Taos Pueblo and 100 Jicarilla Apache residents). This population growth was marked by continued conflict with Taos Pueblo over water and encroachment on tribal lands.

Despite these advances, the six emergent plazas lacked the basic amenities of a town, including resident priests. The same priest from the mission church of San Gerónimo at Taos⁷ also ministered to the other communities, and all of the settlements belonged to the same parish until the completion and secularization of the chapel of Guadalupe at Don Fernando de Taos in 1826 (Weber 1996:21, 23).⁸ This official status was conferred at the urging of Padre Antonio José Martínez.⁹ Padre Martínez, famous as an idealist and defender of Indian and vecino rights, was the son of the wealthy hacienda owner Severino Martínez of Taos. Padre Martínez opened the first school in Taos, brought the first printing press to the village, and also was implicated in the foment and discontent leading up to the Taos Rebellion of 1847. This revolt followed on the heels of the U.S. invasion of New Mexico and the establishment of the Maxwell Land Grant, the largest of its kind in U.S. history.

In 1841, just five years before the U.S. invasion, Charles Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda of Taos applied to Governor Manuel Armijo for the grant, promising to encourage new settlers to come to the area and utilize its resources. Beaubien was a French-Canadian trapper who came to New Mexico in 1832, became a Mexican citizen, married a 16-year-old Hispanic girl of high standing, and opened a store in Taos. Miranda was a gentleman from Chihuahua who had come to New Mexico on business and stayed. The initial claim was hotly contested in court by Padre Martínez, who charged that the petition included the communal grazing lands and traditional bison hunting grounds of the Taos Indians and the Jicarilla Apaches. The grant in fact encompassed the entire territory and all of the villages of *La Xicarilla*, which was permanently occupied by the Jicarilla from the initial Spanish contact in 1541 until Comanche raiding ensued in the 1700s. Miranda and Beaubien nevertheless took possession of the land in 1843 by selling off interests to powerful individuals, such as the governor of New Mexico, Manuel Armijo, and also Charles Bent who owned an adjoining tract. In 1843, after Armijo received his quarter interest, he approved an additional adjacent grant to Beaubien's son, Narciso, and son-in-law Stephen Louis Lee. Narciso also was a principle heir to the Beaubien-Miranda tract.

On August 22, 1846, General Stephen Kearney led the US Army into the Mexican territory. Governor Manuel Armijo put in a brief appearance at the head of a ragtag militia defending Santa Fe, but then fled with Guadalupe Miranda to Chihuahua, Mexico. After the invasion, New Mexico was incorporated as a U.S. territory.

⁶ Some of these early settlers included Antonio Jose Ortiz, Juan Joseph Romero, Cristobal Tafoya, Joseph Villalpando.

⁷ Established in 1706 (Kubler 1990).

⁸ The St. Francis de Asís church first belonged to the San Gerónimo parish, and then to Guadalupe, but became a separate parish in 1937 (Rodríguez 2006:104). The chapel at Talpa was established some time between 1820 and 1851 (Kubler 1990:127), and the one at Llano Quemado some time after 1900.

⁹ Following Mexican independence from Spain, Church authorities in Mexico withdrew the Franciscan missionaries from New Mexico. In 1832, the last of the Franciscan regional authorities authorized Padre Martínez to supervise the Penitente brotherhood. Bishop Lamy unsuccessfully attempted to suppress the brotherhood as a part of the secularization of the Church in New Mexico and it was in the context of this so-called Secular Period (ca. 1790-1850) that the Penitentes grew strong, fulfilling important needs for spiritual solace and collective survival in the isolated frontier setting of the northern Rio Grande (Weigle 1970). Padre Martínez championed the Penitente cause, putting him squarely at odds with Lamy.

When Kearny departed to secure California, he left Colonel Sterling Price in command of the Missouri volunteers (including the First Dragoons), and appointed Charles Bent as New Mexico's first territorial governor.

Atrocities committed by the American forces at Taos as well as the perceived threat of imperial expansion and the apparent land grab of Beaubien, Miranda, and others including Bent sparked the fateful Taos Rebellion. On the morning of January 19, 1847, the insurrectionists began the revolt in Don Fernando de Taos. The attack was led by Pablo Montoya and a Taos Indian named Tomás Romero (Tomasito). The Taos Pueblo rebels went to the home of Governor Charles Bent, broke down the door, shot Bent several times with arrows, and scalped him in front of his wife and children. Several other government officials were likewise murdered and scalped. Among them were Stephen Lee, acting county sheriff; Cornelio Vigil, prefect and probate judge; and J.W. Leal, circuit attorney.

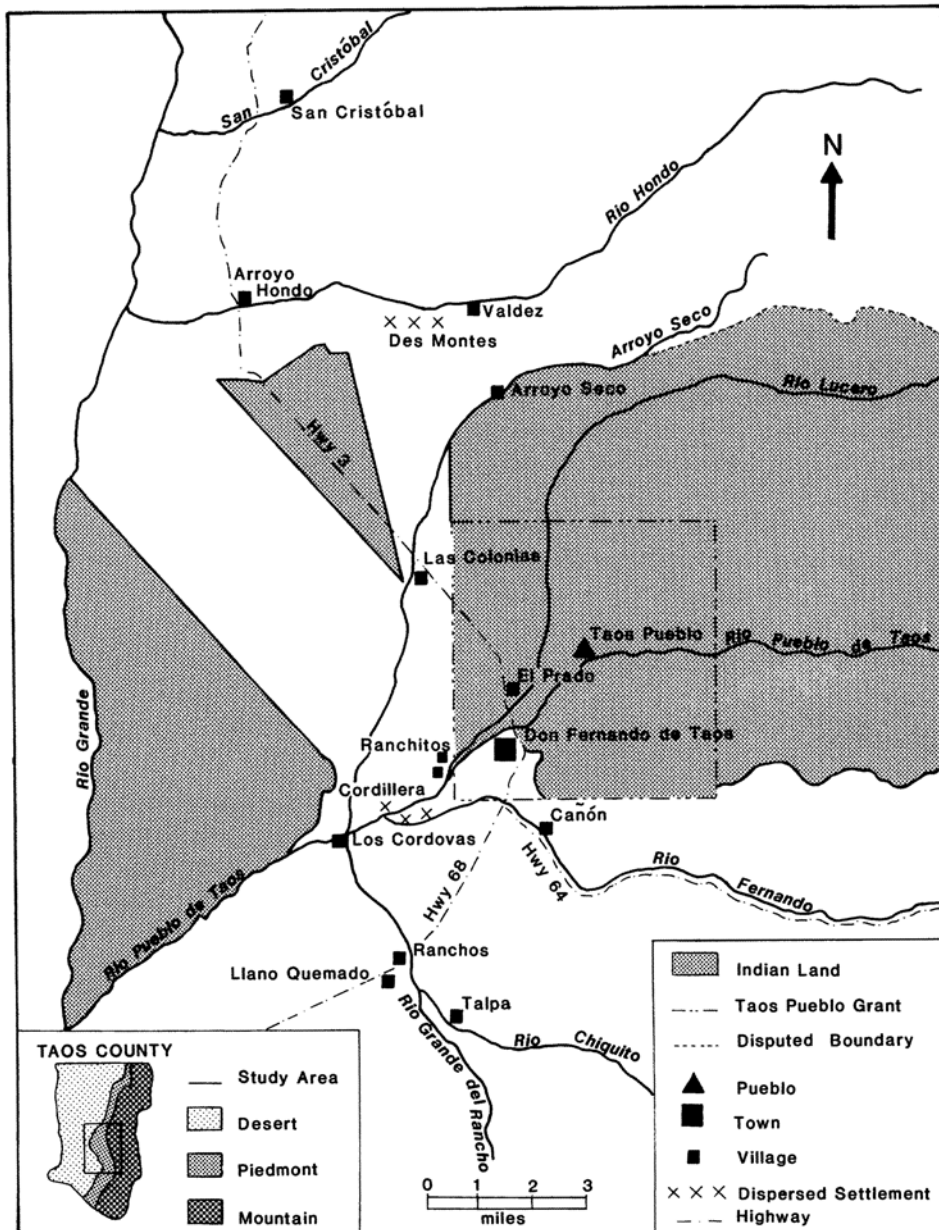
The next day a large mob of approximately 500 Taoseños and Indians attacked and laid siege to Simeon Turley's Mill in Arroyo Hondo, several miles outside of Taos. Charles Autobeas, an employee at the mill, saw the crowd coming and rode to Santa Fe to inform the occupying American forces about the revolt and to get help, leaving eight to ten mountain men to defend the mill. After a day-long battle, only two of the mountain men, John David Albert and Autobeas' half brother Thomas Tate Tobin, survived, both escaping separately on foot during the confusion of night fighting. On that same day Mexican insurgents killed seven American traders passing through the village of Mora.

Rebel forces also attacked San Miguel, Pecos, and Las Vegas (Swadesh 1974:64). One of the Hispanic leaders, Manuel Cortéz, led rebel forces against the American military at Embudo near Taos during January of 1847 and again in Mora during February. After the destruction of Mora by the Americans, Cortéz and most of his followers fled to the surrounding mountains where they took refuge with the Jicarilla (Anonymous 1974:84). From there, the insurgents continued to resist U.S. occupation through the use of guerrilla tactics. Cortéz and his rag-tag band, some 600 strong, remained a threat until the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in February of 1848. The treaty ended all hope on the part of the rebels for Mexican military reinforcements as well as the legal claims against the Beaubien-Miranda Grant.¹⁰ The insurgents gave up, but the Jicarilla continued the fight for *La Xicarilla* well into the 1850s.

At the time of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, approximately 18 agriculturally-based communities were present in the Taos Valley (Rodríguez 2006:22). Sheep were the mainstay of the ranching economy (Baxter 1987) and farming continued through the sharing of water during times of plenty and drought. Today the Ranchos de Taos Plaza and the surrounding communities of Los Córdovas, Cordillera, Talpa, and Llano Quemado are included in the St. Francis Parish and Río Grande del Rancho watershed (Figure 1). Each parish contains a mother church and several chapels located near *camposantos* and *moradas*. These churches serve the populations of the nucleated and dispersed communities that crystallized into a multicomunity during the 18th and early 19th centuries.

¹⁰ Beaubien intended to pass control of the Grant down to his son, Narcisco, but after he was killed, the management and ultimately the ownership of the grant passed to Lucien Maxwell, a former trapper and the husband of Beaubien's fifteen year old daughter Luz. Maxwell eventually settled down on the ranch and established good relations with the Jicarillas who continued to occupy the territory until the grant was lost in an 1872 stock and bond selling scheme of monumental proportions (Keleher 1964:116).

Figure 1. Ranchos de Taos and Neighboring Villages (from Rodríguez 1991).



Village Life and Social Organization

The history of Hispanic settlement and social organization in New Mexico is generally divided into two parts. The earlier period dates from the first colony established by Juan de Oñate in 1598 to the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. This was the period of the great *encomiendas* and large land grant settlements within and adjoining Pueblo lands. The second period begins after the reconquest and is characterized by a general filling in of Spanish settlement in areas between Pueblos, the development of land grant towns, corporate communities, and multicommunities within smaller homestead grants. This process ushered in the persistent social formation recognized as *Hispano* society in the Taos Valley starting in the 1730s. Following Bustamante (1982:6; see also Carrillo 1997:26), *Hispano* is a cultural term used to refer to individuals of Spanish, mixed, or unknown ancestry living in the northern Río Grande region. Despite genetic ambiguities characteristic of the Spanish Borderlands, *Hispano* individuals participated in similar rites of passage (of Mexican-Spanish origin), spoke Spanish as their primary language, and practiced Catholicism.

Hispano culture emerged from several centuries of sustained inter-cultural contact in the northern Spanish Colonial frontier in which the Spanish slave system was a major contributor (Brooks 2002). Starting in the 1640s, slave raiding funneled thousands of nomadic captives into the colony, most of them women and children. The mixed progeny of these captives, called *genízaros*, were born free but had lost their individual tribal identities, customs, and languages after having been raised in Spanish communities. As *Hispanos* or *Hispanos*, *genízaros* established a new identity created from Spanish and Native American roots. *Genízaros* constituted nearly one-third of the population of New Mexico by the late eighteenth century (Brooks 2002; Schroeder 1972:62). By the mid-1700s the colonial government encouraged these individuals to settle into villages with grants of land and livestock (Chavez 1979). During those years, *genízaros* were living in Abiquiu, Ojo Caliente, Carnué, in a number of Río Grande Indian pueblos, Belén, Tomé, the Puerco Valley and Ranchos de Taos (Quintana 1991:31).

By the 19th-century the basic outlines of vecino culture and *Hispano* identity were fully entrenched in the Taos Valley. This culture is commonly defined by a corporate organization and economy that was centered on village and religious life. The following sections provide a brief outline of *Hispano* village organization and economy with special reference to Ranchos de Taos.

The Corporate Community

The small corporate village community was the primary unit of rural social organization, landholding, and agro-pastoral production. Virtually all of the small villages held community pastures, mountain grazing lands and woodlands in common. They also exercised corporate control over the community water supply and the maintenance of other agricultural facilities such as threshing floors and grist mills. In stock-raising, corporate control extended to regulating the size of individual herds and the use of communal pastures. The boundaries of village lands and land grants delimited the territories for corporate economic exploitation, and separated populations into distinct political and religious identities.

Van Ness (1991) argues that the corporate community was the foundation of village life. Villages were corporate in the sense that the major political, religious, and social institutions were self-governing and highly integrated through communal decision-making. Each settlement maintained its own territory, *morada*, and other political and social institutions, as well as its own set of ceremonies, songs, saints, and observances tied to a calendrical cycle. Communities were linked through cross-cutting kinship ties that could be mobilized during times of crisis. Van Ness (following Reina 1965) uses the term "multicommunity" to describe the system of structured and interconnected relations between neighboring villages and ranchos. These relations included protection for mutual defense and exchange. The Ranchos de Taos multicommunity, consisting of the plaza and the surrounding settlements of Los Córdovas, Cordillera, Talpa, and Llano Quemado is an excellent example.

All the villages making up the Ranchos de Taos multicomunity further exist in a kind of upstream-downstream relationship to one another, with each situated in an upper, middle, or lower watershed zone (Rodríguez 2006:21). A village's location dictates its relationship to the neighbors with whom it must share irrigation water. Such multicomunities, existing within a single watershed and sharing associated acequia madres, form a unified religious entity or parish that is administrated at the highest level by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Each parish is comprised of a mother church, and one or more capillas or chapels and moradas distributed among village clusters. The Ranchos de Taos Plaza is situated in the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, which serves to integrate the population and coordinate the ritual cycle.

Settlement Pattern and Economy

Vecino settlement types of the 19th-century are further defined by variations in size, degrees of permanence, and length of existence (Van Ness 1991:8; see also Simmons 1969). These settlement types in turn may be related to the organization of Hispanic society at different scales. Larger villages (also called *poblaciones* or *plazas*) consisted of compact village centers surrounded by dispersed ranching settlements. These communities maintained a permanent church with a resident priest, multiple plazas, and a dense occupation exceeding 400 people. The Ranchos de Taos Plaza is one example. Secondary villages, or *plazas* were made up of dispersed ranchos or farmsteads that were spatially consolidated for mutual defense. *Plazas* contained a minor church or *capilla*, and one or two plazas that were occupied by 20 to 40 families. Llano Quemado, Talpa, and Los Cordovas are secondary plazas associated with the Ranchos de Taos village. Individual *ranchos*, also called *piorías*, *parajes* (encampments) or *puestos* (outposts) (see Westphall 1983; Swadesh 1974:133) were comprised of dispersed homesteads distributed among adjacent agricultural plots that fronted major and minor tributaries.

McBride (1923) has described the characteristics of *ranchos* and *rancheros* in his seminal study of land tenure systems of Mexico. Westphall (1983) and others (Van Ness 1991) have subsequently used McBride's descriptions to outline the nature of *ranchero* settlement in New Mexico. In its general usage, the term implies a small rural property or *merced* assigned by a state governing body to individual families or groups of co-resident families forming a collective for the purpose of subsistence-level farming or ranching.

According to McBride (1923:82), a large *rancho* might be surrounded by as much as 1,000 hectares or around 2,500 acres, particularly if it were owned by a collective. The term thus may be used to describe the small grant holdings that became prevalent in the Taos Valley during the 1800s, but in its more specific usage refers to the area of settlement within the grant rather than the entire grant. The general size and nature of a *rancho* also may be compared with the American homestead. Ranchos occurred either singly or as aggregates of several score or hundreds of families, the larger of which might be termed a *ranchería*, *placita*, *paraje*, or *puesto*.

Ranchos are best thought of as small scale enterprises focused on subsistence level production. They were either worked by the people who owned them or the lands were rented by individual farmers and ranchers. Renting was especially prevalent in areas where there were labor shortages, like Taos where it was easier to sublet lands than to hire the labor required to manage them. Either way, rentals and sales of community property were the most common types of town financial enterprises, and a defining feature of *rancho* land tenure. The Jicarilla enclave, for example, farmed lands lent to them by Hispanic *rancheros*.

McBride points out that the majority of the Mexican *rancheros* were mixed blood or *meztizo*. Subsequent Mexican researchers have noted that *ranchos* are best thought of as small enterprises, run by "*creoles*" or *castas* (people of mixed descent). They were the most heterogeneous segment of colonial society (Chance 2003:17). McBride further states that *rancheros* employed the same basic techniques for farming as were used by the Indians, but that they nonetheless maintained a Spanish heritage and language. Many of the *rancheros* of the Taos Valley also were of mixed ancestry, particularly after the 1780s. Researchers in New Mexico have related *ranchero* genealogy and lifestyle to the emergence of a distinctive *Hispano* heritage that involved significant Indian input.

As regards labor, *ranchos* were largely self-sufficient but relied on the pooled labor efforts of neighboring families or communities during peak planting, harvesting, or herding seasons. As will be argued, the Ollero enclave also

provided much-needed labor during the peak seasons. The main staples grown in the *ranchos* included corn, beans, wheat and oats, chile, a variety of squashes, and peas. In some areas, fruit trees like apples, apricots, and peaches were planted. Wild plants, particularly Rocky Mountain beeweed plant (*Cleome serrulata*), goosefoot (*Chenopodium album*), purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), as well as piñon nuts were gathered during the spring and summer to supplement the diet, and numerous native species were selected for medicinal uses (see Wozniak et al. 1992:163-164). A typical *ranchero* family also usually owned small flocks of sheep or goats numbering thirty to forty head and kept a small number draft animals (that in some cases were communal property) in addition to chickens and pigs (Weigle 1975).

Galindo (2004:195) defines the *ranchero* household as “comprising members of an extended kin network, residing in multiple structures, arranged strategically along the landscape.” Using census data from Texan and northern Mexican *ranchos*, she shows that the generalized small-scale enterprises of a *ranchero* were made possible by a certain amount of specialized production at the household level. Some households chose to raise more sheep and goats than cattle or horses. Others chose to raise cows and horses to the exclusion of sheep and goats. This specialization implies mutual cooperation among the residents in order to ensure the survival of the *ranchero* and its neighbors. Galindo’s study helps to establish some expectations for the organization of household production, site structure, and settlement pattern in the Taos Valley *ranchos*. By extending Galindo’s model, it should be expected that the presence of a Jicarilla enclave within the *ranchero* environment should have added additional dimensions of specialization and cooperation that enhanced survivability.

Wozniak et al. (1992), provide a thorough examination of 19th-century and early 20th-century Hispanic site structure that further define *ranchero* households in the Taos Valley. The common types of buildings and facilities making up a typical *ranchero* household included mud and thatch (*jacale*) structures, and adobe houses. Dried foods were stored in ceramic vessels, adobe bins, or wooden bins that were placed in a *dispensa* or storage shed attached to the main residence. Grain, farm implements, and fodder were stored in a *fuerte* or thick-walled stone structure (Wozniak et al. 1992:153). Other storage facilities included subterranean *soterranos* and raised platforms (*tapeistes*). Animals were kept in pens or corrales near the houses. Together, these closely-spaced domestic structures comprised an extended family household compound.

The communal structures and facilities of a *ranchero* included not only *acequias* and corrales but also communal threshing floors, grist mills and roads. Threshing floors consisted of a large circular corral enclosing a prepared mud floor. Domestic animals were herded in circles within the corral atop harvested grains or beans until they became separated. Threshing floors were usually placed in the vicinity of houses. Where stream flow permitted, a grist mill was established for grinding wheat. These log structures were placed over streams, ditches, or drainages and affixed with a waterwheel and millstone for grinding. Wagon roads and trails spread out from *ranchero* settlements to link neighboring habitations and villages.

Interethnic Relations

Despite the outward appearance of self-sufficiency, village clusters and settlements were not isolated or closed communities. The social and economic relationships of multicomunities and *ranchos* also extended to surrounding Indian neighbors. For example, Rodríguez (2006) documents a long history of water-sharing between Taos Pueblo and the Hispanic farmers of the middle Río Pueblo, and Swadesh (1974:173) describes widespread trade in bartered goods that continues to this day. Swadesh describes these exchange relations in terms of an “extended-kin model of interaction.” Interaction involved the extension of kin terminology, “respectful” behavior, and delayed reciprocity to individuals outside of one’s family with whom a trade partnership was sought or maintained. Frequently these partnerships were multi-generational and reinforced through formal arrangements such as baptism (sponsorship) and adoption. Extra-community ties with Indian people were critical to local village and settlement economies, particularly at Ranchos de Taos who shared communal lands with nomadic Jicarilla Apaches until their removal to agencies at Cimarron and Abiquiú during the 1860s.

Researchers in the northern Río Grande similarly recognize that Hispanic culture extends to cross-cutting material practices, many of which are Native American in origin (Carrillo 1997; Cordell and Yannie 1991:105-106; Moore 1996; See also Vierra 1992 and references therein). Historic Hispanic settlements often are found on prehistoric

Pueblo sites, and prehistoric materials are a common component in Hispanic surface assemblages. Pueblo farming practices were adopted by Hispanic farmers (Eiselt 2006), and a distinctive stone tool assemblage was used in penitent rituals and for processing domestic livestock (Moore 1996; Carrillo, personal communication 1999). Historic documents dating from the 1700s to 1900s indicate that Hispanics wore Indian-made clothing and used bows and arrows and lances, many of which were purchased from local nomadic groups (Kenner 1969; Simmons 1991; Swadesh 1974:196-197).

Land Management and Acequia Culture

Above all else, the corporate organization of villages was a function of democratic forms of land management related to ditch irrigation. These management practices had a major impact on regional biodiversity and local identities. For instance, the *acequia* and long-lot agricultural complex of the Upper Río Grande was much more than an adaptation to semi-arid mountain environs. It promoted and protected biodiversity by creating a patchwork of habitats linked by cross-cutting irrigation corridors (Peña 1999). Activities related to farming and herding were organized at the local level by self-governing bodies and civic leaders (*parciantes*), the most notable of which were the *acequia* associations who managed ditch systems and coordinated access to irrigation water (Crawford 1988; Rivera 1998; Rodríguez 2006).

Ecological imperatives and ditch management, in turn, formed the basis of a moral economy and ethic that bound communities to a particular landscape, established membership in a devotional community, and set the boundaries of honor and shame through water sharing, reciprocity and religious celebration. Accordingly, the *parciantes* of a ditch system,

“construct the social meaning and purpose of their lives as members of a community out of sacred and secular acequia practices. This community identifies itself as historically contiguous, genealogically connected, territorially placed, and socially enacted through the interrelated practices of irrigation, ditch management, water sharing, reciprocity, and religious celebration...The ditches and the practices that maintain their functionality and communal meaning represent the historical process through which the natural topography becomes a moral landscape.” (Rodríguez 2006:76).

By the early 1800s, most of the acequia associations were comprised of male civic leaders who gained their status and legitimacy through membership in *Los Hermanos Penitentes*. The rise of this Catholic confraternity was the result of the decline of Franciscan order in New Mexico. After the secularization of the Franciscan missions from 1830-1850, the local populace (particularly the rural segments) had no priests and no access to the sacraments. *Los Hermanos Penitentes* evolved and elaborated their own rites and practices in response to these local community needs. Rituals were completely separated from the Church and established in *moradas* (chapter houses) maintained by the confraternity without ecclesiastical oversight. Over time these *moradas* evolved into corporate political bodies with the eldest brother or brothers in charge. Nearly every small community in the Taos Valley maintained a *morada* by the 1850s. Civic and religious leadership thus was combined into an overarching democratic system that coordinated community efforts and integrated the rules of land tenure and land management.

The Economy and Status of Women

The traditional village Hispanic family pattern is the patrilocally extended family. However, patrilocal, matrilocal, and neolocal residence were and are practiced, depending on economic circumstances. Trade outside the community, wage labor, and farming were typically carried out by the men, and civic and religious organizations were typically made up of male heads of households. Women nonetheless had realms of expertise that served local communities and a society and economy of their own (Deutsch 1987:722). This economy was parallel to that of the men, with one important difference. It was more heavily focused on barter between villages rather than wage labor and cash transactions outside of the village context. These economies and the social networks they supported sustained intercommunity interaction and created localized community neighborhoods.

Hispanic women also bought and sold land, led church services, raised the children, cooked, acted as local *curanderos* or doctors, and carried on other business transactions. They were responsible for the family garden or *suerte* or *huera* (a plot of irrigated land close to the house) and controlled it totally (Deutsch 1987:726). There they raised their own produce, including cash-earning items such as chile, eggs, and cheese that were traded to other female neighbors and relatives. Female activities also extended to religious duties and ritual. The female counterpart of *Los Hermanos Penitentes* was, and still is, the *Auxilarias de la Morada*. The primary duties of the *Auxilarias* include the cleaning and care of the morada, nursing of the sick, the preparation of the meals during Holy Week, and the preparation of the dead for viewing and support for the bereaved family.

The apparent independence of New Mexican women within the context of their village was distinct in many ways from that of central Mexico and other Mexican frontier territories (Lecompte 1981) and may be attributed to the high status and relative freedom of women in frontier conditions as well as cross-cultural intermarriage and influences from neighboring Indian people (Swadesh 1974:196).

Proposed Investigations at the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish

SMU-in-Taos initiated pilot research at Ranchos de Taos in 2006 based on discussions with local plaza residents, the Bruni Foundation, and the University of New Mexico, Department of Anthropology concerning the renovation of "Andy's La Fiesta Saloon" and other aspects of historical preservation on the plaza. At this time a multi-year research project focusing on the history of human occupation in the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish was conceived (Huckell et al. 2006; Adler 2006). At her invitation in the summer of 2006, SMU-in-Taos initiated test excavations at the house of Ms. Guadalupe Tafoya. This work resulted in the discovery of a small kitchen midden in Ms. Tafoya's living room just below the ground surface. The midden extended beneath an external wall foundation to the west and into an adjoining room to the north. It yielded numerous Tewa and Tiwa ceramics in addition to Jicarilla Apache micaceous sherds and an Apache metal arrow-point. Animal bone, lithics, and plant remains also were recovered (Gonzalez 2007). The general lack of Euroamerican trade items including glass, tin, or ceramics, suggests that the midden was created some time prior to the 1840s. Test excavations also were conducted behind the bar of Andy's La Fiesta Saloon and produced a similar assemblage. This work demonstrates that intact subsurface materials exist on the Plaza and that additional excavation and survey in the area will reveal important information regarding the history of the Ranchos de Taos settlement. The following sections provide a brief archaeological background and review of possible research questions that will guide future investigations.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

A recent (Feb. 5, 2006) search of the New Mexico Archaeological Resources Management System (ARMS), a computerized database of historic and archaeological sites in the state, yielded eight site numbers. The two of immediate importance to this research are LA4972, the San Francisco de Assisi Mission Church, and LA8976, the historic Ranchos de Taos Plaza. The state site records list both the mission church and plaza as post-1539 historic properties, and each is listed on the state register of historic places. The other six sites listed in ARMS for the Ranchos vicinity are all historic acequias that, according to the state site files, all post-date the initial A.D. 1539 occupation of the area.

The Fort Burgwin Research Center also houses site information and collections that were generated through survey and excavation in the 1960s to 1980s by Fred Wendorf, Ron Wetherington, Helen Blumenschien, Ann Woosley, and Herbert Dick. Survey projects have recorded numerous sites that are relevant to the current project, and fall within the defined project universe. This includes survey along the northern slopes of the Picuris Mountain within the Cristobal de la Serna Grant and adjoining areas by Ann Woosley. Figure 2 includes a map that identifies a number of sites within this project area. Additional survey and excavation under the supervision of Mike Adler has identified numerous sites in the vicinity of the Fort and Pot Creek Pueblo.

Research Questions

In a 1976 publication, Paul Kutsche and his colleagues (Kutsche et al. 1976; see also Moore et al), laid out several broadly-defined research questions pertaining to northern New Mexico Hispanic archaeology. These questions revolve around material, social, economic, and ideological issues and take a multidisciplinary approach, combining archaeological, ethnographic, and historical information. Preliminary research questions for the Ranchos de Taos project are derived from this article with special reference to the Taos Valley.

The proposed work seeks to discover and monitor archaeological patterning at three levels of geographic inclusiveness; the household and village, the Parish (or multicommunity), and the broader Río Grande del Rancho watershed. The overarching research goal is to investigate the evolution of Hispano society in the Taos Valley with respect to architecture, settlement pattern, and village life. A secondary goal is to understand the nature of cultural persistence and change in the Taos Valley including strategies of resistance and inter-village or interethnic cooperation. The initial research questions as defined below are necessarily broad and general, but will be refined with input from the community and future findings.

The Village: Level 1

These questions pertain to the development and structure of village life with an initial focus on the Ranchos de Taos Plaza. Although research is aimed at identifying the physical limits and growth of the plaza over time, archaeological work will focus primarily on the household and associated features including the size and spatial arrangement of houses, the nature and function of household structure and facilities, the compositions (genealogies) of households, and associated material culture and foodways. The size and arrangement of dwellings will provide useful information on family size and family structure (e.g. whether a household was extended or nuclear). Also relevant is information on the materials and techniques involved in the construction of houses and other types of structures. Close dating of rooms also should indicate the dynamics of family size, composition, and growth. The relative wealth of individual households will be monitored through artifact inventories, records, probates, and wills.

Based on this research, we hope to achieve a better understanding of household organization, the village community, and the corporate and social nature of village life. This includes an assessment of the pattern, density, date of first settlement, and duration of occupation in particular villages as well as patterns of land use and economy associated with particular villages and village genealogies. We also anticipate investigating individual or isolated farmsteads to gain insight into the range of variation in 19th-century Hispanic homesteading and associated features (e.g. *soterranos*, *hornos*, *jacales*, etc.) through time.

Finally, we are interested in investigating gender-based patterns of social interaction and activities including intervillage and interethnic trade, and household or ranch-related work. Most of this information will be derived from archeological excavation and interpretation of the spatial arrangement and composition of artifact assemblages. Of particular relevance is trade in locally-produced ceramics between women of different villages and the composition and structure of kitchen assemblages including cookpots and serving dishes.

Supplementary research questions include the following.

1. How is social organization and economic structure reflected in the material inventory of the Ranchos de Taos community?
2. Can we reconstruct the life histories of individual buildings with reference to archaeological materials and family genealogies?
3. How did the local economy and social networks change after the introduction of Euroamerican products and wage-labor practices after the 1840s?

4. Which portions of artifact assemblages were produced on site and which were imported from surrounding communities or manufactured in distant locations?

The Saint Francis of Assisi Parish (multicommunity): Level 2

Questions relating to the Parish focus on broader demographic patterns as well as ecological, land management, and economic issues. This includes the nature and structure of the multicommunity, economic and other differences between individual villages within the Parish (including patterns of economic specialization and interdependence); and cooperative use of water and other limited resources. The major goal of research is to understand how social structure was elaborated at the level of the multicommunity to provide for community religious, defensive and subsistence needs. The nature and evolution of Parish settlement will be investigated through non-intrusive survey and settlement pattern data primarily. Pedestrian survey, aerial and satellite photography, and historical maps will enable us to locate roads, trails, grazing lands, homestead boundaries, farm plot boundaries, and irrigation ditches in relation to dwellings. We will compare these spatial or demographic patterns to data we have recovered through excavation including individual household inventories and features among villages. Historic and ethnographic documents in addition to physical features such as markers, ditches, and dwelling enable us to map the dimensions and boundaries of Parish-related activities through time.

The ethnic composition of villages, while fluid and changing, also was an important aspect of vecino identity and social organization on the northern frontier and it contributed substantially to the development and economic functioning of multicommunities, particularly in the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish. The ethnic composition of villages within Parish villages will be investigated as much as possible through historic documents (e.g. census, birth, and adoption records) and artifact inventories.

Supplementary research questions include the following.

1. Can the original dispersed ranches of the pre-1770s Las Trampas settlement be located and defined?
2. How did the physical layout (plan) of the post-1770s Plaza and surrounding community evolve over time and how does this development relate to the growth of surrounding acequias, farmlands, and sacred landscape features such as rock art, shrines, and cemeteries?
3. Is there evidence for specialization between villages and ranches making up the Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, or between different homesteads or ranches?

The Rio Grande del Rancho Watershed: Level 3

At this level, research is aimed at understanding the evolution of the cultural and natural landscape of the Rio Grande del Rancho watershed. This includes not only environmental reconstructions through the application of geomorphological and paleoenvironmental techniques, but also the development of the “built environment”, which includes broad patterns of population growth, the inscription of cultural practices on the land, and the development of “embodied” landscapes with spiritual and emotional dimensions. The goal of this portion of the study is to understand the development of local ecologies and the meanings attributed to landscape and place as a tangible aspect of plaza and parish identity.

Ethnographic documents and oral traditions (stories about places) provide indispensable sources of information on Traditional Cultural Properties. The inscription of cultural practices on the land also take the form of irrigation ditches (Rodríguez 2006), garden plots, churches, architecture, cemeteries, shrines, processional routes, and rock art, which will be mapped and described. Also important are the various resource harvesting locations including areas where medicinal plants, game animals, and timber are obtained, mineral and clay mines, and springs for hot or cold water. Given that at least some of this information is culturally sensitive, we will seek permission before recording or documenting such features or places, and we will maintain confidentiality for all site locations as requested.

When combined with paleoenvironmental and geomorphic reconstructions, we should be able to learn a great deal about historical human impacts to the Rio Grande del Rancho watershed, which might include the creation and maintenance of biodiversity through ditch management and agricultural practices or patterns of destruction related to the introduction of European domesticates. With this information in hand we hope to define and interpret the responses to environmental degradation or climatic change and the degree to which flexibility in social organization and community patterns of cooperation off-set periods of drought. This includes information on the degree to which prehistoric Pueblo landscapes, facilities, and tools were adopted or enhanced by Hispanic settlers.

Interethnic Exchange

One of the key features of Taos Valley history and frontier archaeology more generally is the degree to which interethnic exchange shaped local identities and society. This is particularly relevant in the Ranchos de Taos area, which has long been known as a “genizaro” or mixed-blood settlement with strong ties to the Jicarilla Apaches and Taos Pueblo. The bonds formed through these alliances enabled Las Trampas and later Ranchos de Taos residents to resist the advances of Comanche raiders and U.S. imperial expansion. Plaza residents today acknowledge this multi-racial background and the role of interethnic blending in the creation of a distinctive Taoseño identity and culture. The nature and structure of interethnic exchange thus is a major feature of archaeological research that cross-cuts all levels of investigation, from the household to the watershed. This portion of the study seeks to understand the process of “creolization” and its material expressions over time as well as the sources of this identity from within and beyond the plaza settlement. This includes possible Jicarilla Apache, Pueblo, Ute, Comanche, and Anglo input and also the role of gender in structuring interethnic or multiethnic exchange (Brooks 2002). Given the apparent proximity and involvement of Jicarilla settlements with Ranchos de Taos, our research will focus on identifying Apache trade items in addition to locating Apache settlements and activities in the Rio Grande del Rancho Watershed. Numerous Apache archaeological sites already have been identified in the surrounding area by previous SMU survey (Girard 1986), and we hope to add to this growing database through non-invasive pedestrian survey and surface documentation of sites.

Finally, the subsistence balance between raising plants and animals was closely related to diet and to patterns of life in Hispanic villages, and sheds light on economic relations between Hispanics and Pueblo Indians. In other areas of the northern Río Grande, researchers have hypothesized that Hispanics continued the Iberian preference for raising livestock, while Pueblo Indians continued their traditional emphasis on raising crops (Smith 1976), but in the Taos Valley, where water was shared between Pueblo and Hispanic ranchers, this may not have been the case. In order to test this hypothesis, we will collect botanical and zooarchaeological information from habitation sites from different periods (18th- through 19th-centuries) to monitor shifts in subsistence balances between the different groups. Historical documents and archaeological site patterning will be compared to bioarchaeological findings.

Supplementary research questions include the following

1. What was the nature of interethnic relations through time, particularly interactions with surrounding Pueblo, Comanche, Apache, and Ute communities. How were these relations structured by gender-specific networks and activities?
2. Where was the Jicarilla mission of the 1720s, and what is the extent, location, and structure of Jicarilla settlement in the Taos Valley prior to the 1890s?

Methods and Techniques

Depending on the nature of the structures and surrounding lands in Ranchos de Taos, we have a variety of investigative approaches that would benefit this project. The primary goal of all the methods will be to systematically discover and evaluate archaeological materials and patterns that will address the above research

issues. The secondary goal is to select and apply those methods that will yield reliable information but will have minimal impact on intact subsurface archaeological materials and standing architecture or other surface features.

Basically, these techniques (in order of emphasis) include 1) systematic pedestrian survey and documentation of surface archaeological sites, 2) aerial survey and the incorporation of spatial data into a comprehensive GIS format, 3) remote sensing and augering to identify the depth and extent of subsurface materials, and 3) controlled excavation of household and associated residential and extramural features as needed.

The documentation of archaeological sites follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standard's and Guidelines for Archaeological Documentation and procedures outlined in the SMU-in-Taos Archaeology Field Operations Manual (Eiselt 2007a). Curation and long-term care of collected artifacts and field records are outlined in the SMU-in-Taos Field Operations Manual and in the SMU-in-Taos Cataloging Protocols Manual (Eiselt 2007b). Collections and records may be stored at the Fort Burgwin Research Center in Taos until such time that the community wishes them to be transferred to the Archaeological Records Management Section (the state archives and collections repository) in Santa Fe or some other accredited museum or facility.

Systematic Pedestrian Survey

Pedestrian survey involves walking across a given plot of land and recording or documenting surface archaeological materials including buildings, features, artifact scatters, trails, rock art, ditches, or other surface phenomena. This includes the production of a photographic record, site mapping, feature mapping, drawings of artifacts and features, in-field artifact analysis and quantification of objects and features, and the collection of artifacts when and if appropriate.

Detailed work includes locating features, diagnostic artifacts, and artifact scatters using a compass and tape in addition or a Zeiss Total Station. Quantitative units will be placed in high-density artifact scatters and features to obtain quantitative data on assemblage contents and the spatial distribution of artifact types. Such units will consist of circular ten-meter diameter "chains" or "dog leashes" anchored to the center of features and scatters. Formal tools and ceramics or pot breaks within units will be assigned a field number, and will be mapped, described, and drawn. Other artifacts may be tallied in the field on field analysis sheets, but not collected. Although surface collections at all of the sites will be kept to a minimum, a limited sample of artifacts may be obtained for analytical purposes. Collected artifacts may include diagnostic ceramic rims, specialty items or datable items requiring a more detailed laboratory examination using comparative materials.

Aerial Survey and GIS

A major contribution of this project will be the development of a comprehensive geospatial database that incorporates information from archaeological survey, aerial and satellite photography, historical maps, and the distribution of geological and ecological resources. GIS and geospatial analysis is a burgeoning field in archaeology and geography that is minimally invasive and can reveal patterns of associations in cultural and natural features through time to look at historical transformations of landscape, society, and interactions between people and environments. Aerial and satellite photography also may be used to identify and locate subsurface and surface features (such as building foundations, trails, or abandoned ditches) that are difficult to see from the ground. When combined with pedestrian survey, aerial photography and geospatial analysis can reveal patterns of associations between dwellings and other types of human activities that contribute to a broader understanding of landscape and place in Hispanic society.

Non-Invasive Remote Sensing

Where appropriate and feasible, excavation will be preceded by geophysical remote sensing. A primary benefit of remote sensing is that it does not involve invasive digging or disturbance of intact archaeological deposits. Over the past few decades, remote sensing research has developed a range of methods to locate subsurface anomalies including building foundations, previously disturbed areas, as well as a range of materials including metals and burned soils.

The most logical geophysical technique to use at this point is ground-penetrating radar. Though magnetometer survey can help locate buried materials including metals and other high-ferrous content materials (including as local basalt), it is likely that the long historic occupation of the area will have scattered a wide variety of metallic materials in and around the property. This includes buried and overhead telephone and electric lines, which create a very “noisy” environment for magnetometer survey. The most appropriate technique therefore should be ground penetrating radar. This is most useful for providing higher-resolution views of buried anomalies, allowing finer-grained views of the extent and depth of buried features on and around plaza or settled areas. We should see building foundations (especially stone-lined examples), large pits dug into the terrace gravels, and any other significant anomalies in the geologic matrix of terraces associated with the Ranchos de Taos and associated settlements.

Minimally Invasive Search Techniques

Following the remote sensing, the project would benefit from an auguring program that will allow us to test the depth of cultural deposits without having to excavate. A bucket auger makes a hole 4 inches in diameter, and brings up materials from as deep as 10-12 feet. Auguring on a grid every 10 meters will provide a good baseline for the spatial distribution and depth of cultural deposits. This technique also should tell us where there are no significant cultural deposits.

Test Pit Sampling

The most informative sampling technique in the early stages of this research is the use of 1 x 1 meter test pit excavations. These relatively small excavations allow significant sampling of archaeological deposits, while also minimizing large-scale disturbance of these same contexts. Given that there has been centuries of occupation on and around the Ranchos de Taos plaza, there is a good chance that these test pit excavations will encounter the remains of earlier structures, features (hearths, storage pits, corrales, etc.) and possibly human burials. Investigations of any such contexts would require larger-scale block excavations that might cover many square meters. Large block excavations might be needed, but only in those circumstances where this highly intrusive form of archaeological investigation is warranted. In other words, preservation of intact archaeological deposits will be an ongoing and important goal for this project.

Analyses of Recovered Materials

We will need to ensure that all materials we recover are analyzed and curated in a professional manner. Depending on the amount and type of material recovered, we will need to summarize information on ceramics, metal tools, and datable materials. Because all the materials recovered will be the property of individual private families or public organizations, we will also need to set up plans for long-term curation of all materials recovered during the research project.

In the interim, we will plan to analyze all ceramic materials recovered, as well as the selection of organic materials for radiocarbon dating. Structural beams in individual households will be cored for viable tree-ring samples upon approval. Tree ring dating will provide important chronological information about the construction sequences of individual homes or structures.

Inclusion of Documentary and Oral Sources of Information

A significant aspect of this research will include documentary and oral sources of information. We will be utilizing a variety of sources such as church registry records, state archives, and other historical documents detailing the lives involved in the long history of occupation and accommodation on the Ranchos the Taos plaza. We have already initiated this research. Mr. Gonzalez visited the state archives in March 2006 and began to collect information on land use, land ownership, and map resource availability for the early historic period in

Ranchos. Additional photographic, map, and historical archives in Taos and Santa Fe counties will be visited again in 2007.

Report Requirements and Deadlines

We are ethically and professionally required to produce a summary report on our findings at the end of each year's research. We will produce a thorough descriptive report detailing all historical and archaeological data and interpretations by June 1 of each year following the fieldwork season. Copies of yearly reports will be distributed to community and church leaders. Two copies of reports will be given to the New Mexico Museum of Indian Arts and Culture for permanent inclusion in the Archaeological Resource Management System.

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