**RECONCILIATION AND RESISTANCE: THE PUEBLO INDIAN REVOLT AND THE SANTA FE FIESTA[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**By**

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**Abstract:** *An annual Fiesta is held in Santa Fe New Mexico that includes a variety of entertainments and activities. The “Entrada” celebrates the return of Don Diego de Vargas after the Pueblo Indian Revolt of 1680 that drove the Spanish out of the territory and back to what is now the Mexican border. From the Pueblo viewpoint, they fought a revolution for religious freedom and self-determination From the Spanish viewpoint, the Pueblos had to be subjugated again for Church and country. Although these events occurred long ago, the de Vargas’ reconquest came to be celebrated in the modern Fiesta. The Entrada consists of a religious procession and a dramatization of the reconquest with armored “conquistadors” and supplicant “Indians.” The city and the various groups struggled with what to do after the Pueblo Governors and protestors demanded that it come to an end. Another battle broke out about the private Fiesta Council’s practice of sending some of the re-enactment characters to the public schools.*

**PART I HISTORY VERSUS PAGEANTS**

In recent years, the Entrada portion of the Santa Fe Fiesta has come under protest. The Entrada evolved with the Fiesta into a celebration of the reconquest of the Pueblo Indians in New Mexico after the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. The character of conquistador Don Diego de Vargas, who legend anoints as leader of the bloodless reconquest for Spain and Church in 1692, is the hero of the procession and a public dramatization. Religious activities, including a procession and a Catholic mass, are embedded in the Fiesta’s entertaining and cultural celebration today. The Entrada story also reaches into the public schools with special visits to represent the narrative.

Countering the theme of a heroic and bloodless reconquest are the rising Pueblo voices that tell quite a different story of a long and bloody resistance where Indian resistors were hung in the Plaza and others were forced into submission. Protests met with arrests in 2017 and publicity about the Entrada threatened to cast a shadow on the tourist-driven economy of Santa Fe and the myth of three separate cultures---Hispanic, Indian and Anglo—living in parallel and pleasant harmony. The questions arise if historians alone are to be the mediators of the truth or if political action needs to be taken to negotiate change.

**A Brief Factual History of the Pueblo Revolt**

In the 1600’s, colonial rule in New Mexico became burdensome to the Pueblos and other Tribes. Despite Spain’s early attempt to assure rights to indigenous peoples, colonial rule in the far away colonies could fall far from such moral theory. The Law of the Indies prescribed what was considered fair treatment for indigenous peoples in the 1600’s, such as not building colonial towns and facilities where they might impact indigenous communities. The missionaries were to be guided by the saving of souls and prayer. But discipline in the missions could be arbitrary or even sadistic (Kessel, 1987). Sometimes the government as well as the Church suppressed religious freedom to practice traditional indigenous religions. In 1675, Governor Trevino ordered 47 Tewa “sorcerers” brought to trial (Kessel, 1987). Traditional religious items were routinely taken from the Pueblos and their ceremonies prohibited. The burden of tribute in labor, woven blankets and other goods grew heavier as the total Pueblo population plummeted from 100,000 to 20,000 in the first eighty years of Spanish rule. The colonial practice of capturing Navajos, Apaches, Comanches and other non-Pueblos as slaves for the mines in Northern Mexico alienated these Tribes.

In 1680 the Pueblos organized a revolt that drove the Spanish from New Mexico. Originally from Okay Owingeh Pueblo and later orchestrating the revolt from the Taos Pueblo to the north, Pope’ was the key figure in the revolutionary struggle. He was a leader in bringing together the Pueblos in a coordinated revolt with support from Navajo and Apache bands as they drove the Spanish from New Mexico. It was a carefully planned military action targeting a specific day. He is remembered as the one who made it possible for the Pueblos to survive as a people, as they revolted against Spanish rule and secured their culture, land rights, and religious freedom (Sando, 2001). The successful revolt ran the Spanish out of New Mexico, down to the Mexican border. The fleeing colonists took with them the religious statue of La Conquistadora that had travelled north from Mexico to New Mexico in 1625.

**The Reconquest…… of 1692, or was it 1693 or 1696?**

On September 13, 1692, after years of sitting at the border in El Paso del Rio del Norte (today known as Juarez) and working to garner support from Mexico City, the newly appointed Governor Don Diego de Vargas initiated a return trip to Santa Fe in 1692. De Vargas returned with 100 soldiers, and other troops gathered from villages or picked up from Pueblos sympathetic to the Spanish and Franciscans. He may have preferred peace, but he came willing to fight if it was necessary to reclaim the lands. The Tano Indians and some Tewas, by then residing in a fortified Santa Fe, first tried to fight them off with arrows, stones and boiling water—the best resistance they could muster. They faced a superior military force with armor, horses, guns and steel swords. Through intimidation, de Vargas did indeed enter the town, but on the threat of cutting off the water supply and attacking (Gonzales, 2018). They gained entrance to the fortress at Santa Fe and other Pueblos through the threat of force, not through the peaceful means of reconciliation (Gonzales, 2018). The friars performed 122 forced baptisms.

De Vargas marched under the banner of “Our Lady of Remedies” in 1692. It is less clear what transpired after his first entrance into Santa Fe. It is unlikely the Indians fully understood his ritual protocols for re-taking the town. They did attempt to treaty with him once he gained entrance. What they certainly understood was that he was leaving soon. It has been said that at least one diplomat from Tesuque Pueblo agreed to the return of the Spanish. De Vargas erected a cross that he kissed and forced the Pueblo residents to kiss and he read a proclamation. It is unclear if the Pueblos fully understood that de Vargas actually intended to reinstate the colonial government and return with colonists. However, it was this moment of re-entry in 1692 that was to be enshrined by the Entrada as the “bloodless" reconquest. He returned south to gather additional military support and colonists.

In 1693 he returned this time with La Conquistadora, the Marian statue venerated by the colonists, and more troops, artillery, missionaries and colonists and fought his way in. Spain was concerned about vacating New Mexico because of encroaching European powers and potential threats to the silver mines. He waged battles for Church and State. The Spanish were hardly welcomed or offered food or lodging. Desperate for both, he found allies at Pecos Pueblo and attacked the Indian settlement in Santa Fe. Some got away, but 400 were captured and sentenced to 10 years servitude, and another 70 were executed behind the village. He justified his actions under the religious mission. In the archival records of the continuing 1693 conquest de Vargas wrote in his journal: “I will destroy those who did not go back to their Christian wives or allow their children to be baptized” (Kessel, 1992). His actions and his journals do not support the idea that he returned with the intention of bringing religious freedom to the pueblos.

De Vargas‘ continued to wage fierce battles, especially at Taos and Jemez Pueblos, as he cemented his reconquest in the ensuing years. He moved his soldiers around New Mexico, subduing Pueblo after Pueblo by force. Forty- seven resisting warriors were hung in the Santa Fe Plaza and more at Jemez Pueblo. This time the Pueblos did not achieve the coordinated support of 1680: they were splintered by factions and some fought with the Spanish. At Pecos Pueblo, some ran for the mountains or other Pueblos, while those that stayed favored the Spanish and provided them military support. The battles raged through 1696 when a second attempt to organize a Pueblo Revolt with all but five of the Pueblos finally aborted. Many Pueblo people left the province entirely rather than face retribution and colonial rule. Those that stayed had earned a greater degree of freedom to practice their religion and culture: they would have to continue to persist in order to maintain it. The pueblo’s willingness to fight long and hard for their cultural and religious freedom had much more to do with achieving their goals than any humanitarian action led by de Vargas. The friars who returned in 1693 stayed mostly in Santa Fe, concerned with the risk of returning to the pueblo villages.. The inquisition ended, reducing the authority of the church militant in general even though the pueblos were not directly under its framework. (Kessel, 1987)

When Spanish rule was in place again, de Vargas, having displayed his military genius, expected to be renamed the Governor of his re-conquered province. However, he was not chosen to fulfill that role. Had he become too divisive a figure with too many bloody battles staining his armor to reunite New Mexico? We may never know, but Spain made another choice for governor and de Vargas faced charges for his actions and was placed under house arrest for three years. However he eventually was acquitted and returned briefly to his post as Governor in Santa Fe in 1703, a year before his death.

The Pueblo efforts were not in vain, for they secured significant human rights as a result of their continued resistance. Religious oppression was lessened and their lands and grants secured. Cultural practices and language survived. Years passed and both sides achieved greater levels of peace, acceptance, and sharing of their tools and technology. Still, the often-harsh experience of European colonialism in the New World imprinted in the history and memory of the Pueblos and underlying conflicts over land, water and religion remained.

**A Brief History of the Santa Fe Fiesta**

In 1712, the Villa de Santa Fe, under Spanish rule, proclaimed an annual religious commemoration and procession through the Plaza of Santa Fe to the Church to celebrate the conquest of Don Diego de Vargas. Under Spanish rule, no distinct separation between church and state existed so it was appropriate for the city to create a religious celebration in cooperation with the Church. No mention of a procession with La Conquistadora was mentioned in the archive (Wilson, 1997). There are no records of the continuance of the 1712 religious event from the mid 1700’s until the later part of the century: the modern invention of the Santa Fe Fiesta wasn’t created until 1911 (Dax, 2018). A procession carrying the La Conquistadora from the Church to the Rosario Chapel and back to the Church after a series of masses continued to be held in June the Sunday after Corpus Christi celebration. A special procession to the Cross of the Martyrs commemorating the 21 priests that died in the Pueblo Revolt was organized.

James Mythen, an Episcopalian minister, came up with the idea of a modern Santa Fe Fiesta the year before New Mexico became a state in 1912. He and his friends agreed on a historic event like the Entrada. During this period, Founder’s Day Celebrations and the erection of statues and monuments was occurring throughout the United States. Building on earlier pageants, Edgar Hewett, a founder of the Museum of New Mexico and the School of American Research (now the School for Advanced Research), took the primary role in staging the event as a way of boosting tourism.

The 3-day pageant style Fiesta was primarily designed as a tourist event. The Museum of New Mexico popularized romantic stereotypes of Indians, Spanish and “Anglos” and promoted the idea of triculturalism. These stereotypes downplayed the existence of the Mexican working-class, particularly after the Mexican-American War (Wilson, 1997). The stereotypes ignored the fact that the systems of racial class and purity had been breaking down since the 1700s, if they ever really existed in the mix of the Spanish and Moors, crypto Jews fleeing the Inquisition, indigenous peoples from both sides of the border, mestizos and various Europeans who actually made up the colonial population. Many New Mexico families held oral histories that honored and acknowledged their mixed ancestry. The lumping of all European-Americans other than the Spanish into “Anglo” also had little actual meaning. Although the three stereotypes were an attractive device for the tourist industry, they fueled racial conflict and a kind of racial profiling that could result in discrimination internally within the three created groups and externally between them.

The first day of the reinvented Fiesta was devoted to Indian dances and performances. By 1919 a fully staged Fiesta was in place and New Mexico Indians, who traveled by wagon and received reimbursement and pay for their participation, were involved. Tourism was on the increase in the 1920s and extensive negotiations were held to engage the participation of Indians (Suina, n.d.). Around 1922, an Indian arts and crafts fair was added. In the 1960’s this event departed from Fiesta to become the internationally known as the Santa Fe Indian Market. A second day was originally devoted to Hispanic history and culture with costumed conquistadors, friars and horses. The script, imbued with legends from previous pageants and tourism-driven stereotypes shaped at least partially through the efforts of the Museum, did not necessarily deal in fact. From the satin and plumed Entrada costumes that little resembled the wear of frontier soldiers to the “bloodless” claim of indigenous submission, much varied from what archivists and historians knew about the events. In 1920, this second version of “de Vargas Day” included a mock trial depicting the court martial of the Governors of Nambe and Santo Domingo Pueblos and two warriors charged with treason and conspiracy. Non-Hispanics sometimes played the Spanish characters. Although the Knights of Columbus portrayed the Franciscan friars in the procession, the Catholic Church was not involved. The third day was devoted to “Anglo” culture to celebrate those arriving with the United States after 1846. This third day was later dropped as well.

With the influx of new residents after World War I, Santa Fe became an art colony bringing in ideas of social, political and artistic change. Social activist Dolly Sloan and poet Whitman Brynner organized a series of free entertainments called the “Pasatiempo.” The irreverent and entertaining events included music, floats, dancing on the Plaza, a children’s animal show and the costumed Hysterical Pageant. Artists Will Schuster and Gustave Baumann created Zozobra, a giant effigy of gloom that has been burned at the Fiesta ever since. Most of these new events, though adapted with time, continued as part of Fiesta. The LaFonda Hotel and the Sociedad de Folklorica added a fashion show with period gowns.

As the Fiesta continued to evolve, religion eventually came to bracket the event around the events of the Reconquest. In 1920, the dedication to the Cross of the Martyrs was added to honor the 21 friars who died in the revolt and in 1934 the de Vargas pageant opened with a high mass. In 1973 the Fiesta opened with a mass and ended with a mass in the Cathedral marking the beginning and end of activities that were now part of a religious event. Later, the knighting of the de Vargas character and the crowning of the Fiesta Queen by the Archbishop further embedded religion into the fabric of the Fiesta.

The Hispanic population, particularly the old families, formed a strong allegiance to the Fiesta as one of their few public cultural traditions, since so much of Santa Fe seemed awash with the tourism economy and the new residents that poured in. The Plaza was no longer the center of the community. From its architecture to its lines of galleries and tourist shops, it was a re-creation of a somewhat mythic past for the enjoyment of visitors. The Hispanic population felt the sting of racism too. Spanish historians discussed the stereotyping from the “Black Legend” that painted a portrait of Spanish colonialism as somehow more repressive and violent than other equally violent practices of colonialism by the practices of other Europeans and later those of the US government.

The respected Spanish historian, Fray Angelico Chavez, summed up the history and direction of the current Fiesta in an article in the *New Mexico Historical Review* in 1953:

The present Santa Fe Fiesta, which will this year advertise it as the 241rst, dates from the period around the First World War, when public-minded citizens, ‘Anglos,’ who appreciated the unique historical Spanish background of Santa Fe, became aware of the grand possibilities in this decree of 1712. They animated ‘hispanos’ with pride concerning their forbears and got them to participate in one big spontaneous folk festival…….Whatever has been left out of Spanish- American folklore has been drowned out by Mexican music and programming.

**Origins of the Entrada**

With the religious character restored, the Santa Fe Fiesta was reborn as a fully Hispanic celebration, with a focus on one ethnicity and the reconquest rather than a whole community celebration. In the beginning, the conquistador characters were often played by ‘Anglos’ i.e. non-Hispanics. The “Entrada” of the historical Spanish conquistador de Vargas, who returned to take Santa Fe after the Pueblo Revolt in 1692, became the centerpiece. Hispanic organizations took over the “script” for the Entrada dramatization some time in the 1950’s. The event became an historical dramatization of a specific version of one moment from a legendary viewpoint on the Spanish reconquest of New Mexico and the script became the proprietary possession of the Knights of Don Diego de Vargas. Although supporting historical evidence for the narrative of the Entrada script that portrayed it as a “bloodless” and voluntary reconquest was missing, it succeeded in continuing to bring tourists to town and embedding the event as truth and tradition in the Hispanic culture of Santa Fe. The Fiesta Council and the Knights of Don Diego de Vargas were created to continue the Entrada: the Caballeros de Don Diego de Vargas took over the Entrada in 1957. Backed by city funds, they send fiesta queens and their courts with costumed conquistadors and priests to the local schools with their version of the “bloodless” reconquest of Santa Fe. As questions arose about the bloodless claim, the Fiesta supporters emphasized it to mean the actual moment that some Pueblos, at least the Tano Indian inhabitants of Santa Fe and a representative from Tesuque, acquiesced to de Vargas’ demand to re-enter Santa Fe with his military detachment in 1692. Although he did not stay at this time, it is unknown if the resident Pueblo people fully understood that this was a reconquest and that he would return with more soldiers and colonists who did aim to stay. It was not until 1693 when he returned to complete multiple battles with the Pueblos for reconquest with more arms and returning colonists that De Vargas brought with him the religious statue “La Conquistadora” that continues to be a focus of the Entrada procession.

**The City of Santa Fe and Pueblo Protests**

Since 1977, the Pueblos made public comments in protest of the Entrada event. Particularly offensive was the “bloodless” reconquest claim and the depictions of pseudo-Indians. The All Pueblo Council of Governors continued to ask for the end of the Entrada and for more balanced and inclusive celebrations. They announced a boycott of Fiesta. Indian participation in Fiesta fell off, although occasionally individual Indians, some from far away, participated. Well-known Pueblo leader Herman Agoyo noted that since Pueblo history wasn’t written and New Mexico history wasn’t covered in school, many children grew up not understanding the meaning of Fiesta.

 In 1992 Diane Reyna, a local videographer and a Pueblo Indian, made a film “Gathering Up Again, Fiesta in Santa Fe (1992). The film raised questions about the Entrada and the practice of dressing up non-Indians, often using stereotypical Plains Indian costumes. The film questioned the idea of the “bloodless” reconquest and the stereotyping of Indians as painted savages. It suggested that more dialogue, discussion and healing was needed after the continued presentation of Fiesta characters, with fake Indians and the honoring of conquistadors and their colonial regime. In that same year, after meetings with the Fiesta Council and the All Indian Pueblo Council to discuss changes in the Entrada, Archbishop Robert Sanchez changed the name of La Conquistadora to Our Lady of Peace. Still, unhappiness with the Entrada grew. In 1993 Herman Agoyo, Executive Director of the Eight Northern Pueblos Council, said the reforms called for in 1992 had fallen short, and he called for its end (Wilson, 1997). Some in the Hispanic community, along with historians from all three cultures, began to question parts of the Entrada presentation.

Public protests to the Entrada in the Plaza began with a small protest in 2013 and again in 2015. Individual Pueblo people began to speak out. By 2016, an organized protest occurred during Fiesta. Pueblo leaders emerged including students at the University of New Mexico. In 2017, things came to a head. The emerging Indian leaders organized a protest again during Fiesta, but they were confined to a small space after a request to the police from the Caballeros de Vargas. When they moved to a more visible position, the police were ready with a full SWAT team like response with snipers on the roofs around the Plaza. Several students were arrested. Jennifer Marley, a leader of the protest, a San Ildefonso tribal member and a University of New Mexico student, was arrested and charged with multiple felonies for assaulting an officer as she touched an arresting officer with a cardboard sign in the melee. Marley had worked locally with participants with the support of the Red Nation Coalition to conduct a peaceful protest. Visitor videos of the event made the arrests look foolish.

The American Civil Liberties Union called the city into question for confining the protesters to a small “free speech” space at the request of the Caballeros. Tourists, the bread and butter of the Santa Fe economy, began to question the treatment of the Indian protestors and their supporters and the visible militaristic response. The city eventually dropped serious charges against eight of the protesters.

**The City of Santa Fe and the Fiesta**

As the protests to the Entrada grew, it was repeatedly mentioned that the City of Santa Fe puts up $50,000 for the Fiesta. The 2017 Fiesta cost the city an additional $87,000 besides the usual costs of providing police, security, traffic enforcement and other infrastructure support for the event. The Caballeros continued to focus on just the first arrival of de Vargas in 1692 as a “moment of peace and reconciliation.” Slowly, historians and protesters forced the acknowledgment of the actual events of the reconquest that continued into 1696. Meanwhile some of those in the community asked why the city had a role in sponsoring the Entrada and if it shouldn’t be entirely supported by private groups in a private venue. The fusion of a religious event with public entertainments and dramatizations made it even harder to see where it fit.

The father and two uncles of Santa Fe Mayor Xavier Gonzales played the part of Don Diego de Vargas in the re-enactment of the “Entrada” and his cousins were Fiesta Queens. Gonzales himself played de Vargas in 1989. As the protests grew, he discussed meetings with the conflicting parties. The Mayor realized by 2016 that something must be done. He talked about negotiating with the affected groups and called for a more truthful presentation. He made public statements that he felt that the Pueblo governments and organizations should come to him. As a result, the city began to bring the local parties together at least with Tesuque Pueblo. Time passed without evidence of meaningful dialogue or action. Nothing significant was accomplished before the 2017 Fiesta that ended with the militaristic response from the Santa Fe Police. Around 180 officers confronted about the same number of protesters. The Police Chief stated that he expected something like the right-wing violence in Charlottesville. The basis of evidence for his analysis remains unknown.

Finally in late 2017, as he neared the end of his term as Mayor and announced that he would not seek a second term in 2018, he indicated that meetings with the All Indian Governor’s Council were on their way. He announced that he “wanted to expand the dialogue” and noted the wounds that have been felt by the Hispanic community…” (Dax, 09/18/17)

Espanola, a smaller town to the north of Santa Fe, was preparing to take action. Mayor Javier Sanchez realized that celebrating the colonial efforts of conquistador Juan de Onate was offensive to neighboring Pueblos. He created a task force to imagine a more inclusive fiesta. He worked with his Council, but the recommendations of the task force failed to achieve agreement. The Council resisted the recommendations and the Mayor and Council voted to end city support for the Fiesta and to move the responsibility for designing and organizing it to local groups (Bennet, Megan (05/31/18). The Fiesta was cancelled for a year while the private groups retooled as they took over the design, funding and support.

In Santa Fe, the situation became increasingly uncomfortable by summer 2018. A furor developed after the Director of the History Museum of New Mexico and Palace of the Governors Andrew Wulf issued a letter to the Fiesta Council requesting that they cease the installation of a wooden armature to display family crests on the front of the Palace of the Governors, a historic building. His concern was damage to the historic structure that was identified by the State’s Historic Preservation Office. The Fiesta Council protested and the direction of the letter was almost immediately rescinded in an email from a spokesman for Veronica Gonzales, the Secretary of Culture Affairs for New Mexico (Ditzler, 2018). Rumors of meetings about the Entrada surfaced. A full page ad in the paper advertised the showing of the new film about the Fiesta and the Entrada, “Veiled Lightning: A Clash of Cultures in the Heart of an Ancient City” on August 17, two weeks before the Fiesta. A prize winner at the International Independent Film Festival and other film festivals, it arrived as part of Red Nation International Film Festival hosted by a popular Santa Fe theater and the New Mexico History Museum. The event received additional support from multiple tribal enterprises.

**PART II: NEGOTIATIONS TO RETIRE THE ENTRADA LEAVE OUT SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS**

The APCG continued to protest the Entrada. This time they created a document that outlined the components of acceptable change. A new mayor began engaging in talks with the key parties. Now the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the All Pueblo Council of Governors (APCG) and the Caballeros were involved. Regis Pecos, a former Governor of Cochiti Pueblo and an experienced legislative analyst and negotiator, was selected to coordinate and act as the spokesman. The talks were private, as in a consultation and the silence continued until about six weeks before the dawn of the Fiesta of 2018. Pueblo Indian activists and Fiesta supporters were not included in the talks.

On July 25, 2018, a flurry of reports emerged that the decision to retire the Entrada was made. *The Santa Fe Reporter* covered a resolution passed in July by the All Pueblo Council of Governors (see Appendix A) that codified months of closed-door negotiations and appeared to confirm that city officials, the Fiesta Council and local Catholic Church leaders agreed that the pageant wouldn’t take place in 2018 on the Plaza. The APCG developed a five-point negotiation plan in December 2017 that demanded that “the Entrada and associated script with pseudo Pueblo representatives cannot under no circumstances continue” (Cantu 07/25/18). On July 11, the partners said the APCG’s resolution was accepted in its entirety and Patricia Trujillo, Director of Equity and Diversity at Espanola’s Northern New Mexico College, said that the resolution was presented at a gathering at the school and was signed the next day (Cantu, 07/25/18). Regis Pecos, the chosen spokesman and well-known political leader from Cochiti, announced that the resolution was passed, but asked for patience until communication between all parties was complete. It remained unclear if all participants were on board. Although they accepted the agreement in its entirety, the 2018 Fiesta Council President Melissa Mascarenas told *the Santa Fe Reporter* that she hadn’t seen the resolution or agreed to it (Cantu 07/25/18).

On August 1, 2018 the Caballeros hit the front page of the *New Mexican* with an announcement that although the Entrada was to be ended, it would be replaced by a new as yet undefined event. They received appreciation from many quarters for making a courageous move to end the Entrada while some in the Hispanic community would protest their decision. Most commonly, those who wanted to keep the Entrada blamed outsiders for its end. The Caballeros planned to create a new event focusing on the 30-inch statue sent from Spain through Mexico in 1625 and carried by the fleeing Spanish settlers to El Paso in 1680. Known by many names, La Conquistadora, Our Lady of Conquering Love (a title preferred by the Caballeros), and more recently named Nuestra Senora de la Paz or Our Lady of Peace, became a symbol of De Vargas’ expedition and resettlement…or reconquest….of New Mexico (Chacon 01/08/18). Regis Pecos, spokesman for the parties involved in the consultation process said “ there are plans for a series of events immediately before the official kickoff of fiestas to “commemorate the negotiations of reconciliation” (Chacon 01/08/18).The Caballeros engaged Estevan Rael-Galvez, a former state historian, to help with designing the new event. Rael-Galvez, said in an email to the *New Mexican*, “ending this 20th century invented tradition….marks, however just the beginning of the necessary work toward reconciliation and healing.“ Peace and reconciliation were to be the new themes. “In this way we have the opportunity to remember our communities whole, connecting a more truthful past with the present” (Chacon, 01/08/18). Still, the Caballeros did not rule out characters dressed as conquistadors in the new event. While an editorial piece in the *New Mexican* suggested that with this unique achievement of reconciliation achieved by all the parties, they said it might be best after agreeing to “leave this flawed pageant behind, it might be worthwhile to take a break for a year before deciding what comes next” (*The New Mexican*, 08/05/18).

By August 1, a week after the initial release that the Entrada was to be ended, Fiesta Council President Mascarenas stated that she had not signed the resolution prepared by the other parties to the consultation, but she intended to sign a new resolution. Not everyone was happy. Some still held to the idea of the “bloodless reconquest” and others blamed “outsiders” for stirring up protests. A member of the “Confradia de La Conquistadora, a religious organization, wrote to the *New Mexican* about how he feels that La Conquistadora and Reconquistadora is still a beautiful title which his ancestors bestowed on the statue after the victory of de Vargas (Mirabel, 2018).

Elena Ortiz, a protest leader from Okay Owingeh, said any protest to the new event would depend on what it looked like and a purely religious event was their own business (Edge, 08/01/18). The historical revisionism was the sticking point for the protesters.

**The Public Schools and the Fiesta**

The Fiesta Council began the practice of bringing the “Fiesta Court” to the public schools. It included costumed conquistadors, Franciscan missionaries, the Fiesta Queen and other members of her court. As the Entrada was questioned, so were these school visits that presented a particular version of the reconquest adapted from the Entrada events and included a man representing Don Diego de Vargas. It could leave Indian students feeling like outcasts, or perhaps feeling forced to experience a version of history that was offensive to them. Native mothers began to speak out. Elena Ortiz from Okay Owingeh asked what about the Fiesta Court in the schools? Wasn’t it even worse than the Entrada? Didn’t it promote revisionist history in the schools and Europeanize real New Mexicans whose culture and ancestry were far more complex? Although summer of 2018 brought an agreement that the Entrada would be replaced by another event, the agreement left out the issue of the Fiesta Court in the schools. President Melissa Mascarenas of the Fiesta Council, countered that there were no immediate plans to end the school visits, “so it’s my plan that we’re going to be there like every year” (Edge, 01/08/18)

Superintendent of Schools Veronica Garcia made what she thought was a conciliatory move in 2017 by offering an opt-out option for students who did not want to attend Fiesta related events at school in 2017. Facing continuing complaints about how history was presented in the Santa Fe Schools, Garcia worked with a diversity task force to create a new proposal to present to the School Board in summer of 2018. The proposal would end the practice of allowing the Fiesta Council to select students to play Little La Reina and Little Don Diego de Vargas. Further, the Fiesta Court presentations would be confined to the New Mexico History classes taught in the 4th, 7th and 9th grades. This seemed a curious proposal, since the complaints were about how history was being presented in the Santa Fe Schools and this would embed the controversial historical revision of the reconquest directly into the history curriculum. On August 17 the Board met to vote on the proposal. Some board members voiced concerns that the strong religious roots of the Fiesta presentations might not be appropriate for public schools (Nott, 08/08/2018). The proposal seemed to satisfy no one. A number of Hispanic parents made loud protests at the board meeting. Fiesta supporters spoke about their dedication to the existing presentations in the schools as an expression of their pride and heritage. The fiesta council continued to resist the limitation of the fiesta court presentations in the Santa Fe schools. They were able to get permission to take the court to the small neighboring community of Pojoaque and vowed to continue to fight to restore the fiesta court to all of the classes.

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**Appendix A**

RESOLUTION

ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

RESOLUTION NO. APCG 2018- 1 B

RECONCILIATION NEGOTIATIONS

WHERERAS, the All Pueblo Council of Governors is compromised of the Pueblos of Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Pojoaque, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Sandia, Santa Ana, Santa Ciara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, Zia, and Zuni, and one pueblo in Texas, Ysleta Del Sur, each having the sovereign authority to govern their own affairs; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the All Pueblo Council of Governors is to advocate, foster, protect, and encourage the social, cultural and traditional well-being of the Pueblo Nations; and

WHEREAS, through their inherent and sovereign rights, the Ali Pueblo Council of Governors will promote the language, health, economic and natural resources, and educational advancement of the Pueblo people; and

WHEREAS, the commemoration of what has become known as the "Entrada de Don De Vargas, Fiestas de Santa Fe" by all historic documented accountants has become an event deviating from the original intent as a religious event honoring the Virgin Mary; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the deviation from the original intent caused the All Indian Pueblo Council in 1977, to formally express their disapproval of the Fiesta de Santa Fe for its offensive display depicted by the re-enactment of the Entrada, articulating in its protest that it perpetuated colonialism and less then the truth that it was a tumultuous time leading to great suffering, trauma and pain for the Pueblo people from these events in the aftermath of the Entrada which was everything than a peaceful and bloodless re-entry as revisionist history inaccurately reflected; and

WHEREAS, continued protests of the event led to the change in the use of the name of our Virgin Mary as La Conquistadora resulting in a response by Archbishop Sanchez to act and refer to the Virgin Mary as Nuestra Senora de la Paz, our Lady of Peace in response to the protests in 1992; and

WHEREAS, the recent events reflect the compelling need for principled dialogue, to come terms to restore the integrity and the dignity of relations built over many years by our respective leaders guided by core values that reflect our collective resilience and perseverance despite the tragic events that reflect the dark side but rising above to deal with the truth and the reality of our history; and

WHEREAS the All Pueblo Council of Governors felt compelled that action was necessary to come to terms in addressing these issues or run the risl< that these matters fueling increased public protest might escalate into a regrettable set of circumstances that innocent people are victimized and traumatized as reflected in the over reaction of law enforcement with a full and militaristic response that reopened wounds that have taken many generations to heal; and

WHEREAS, these issues compelled the All Pueblo Council of Governors to take action calling for a meeting with the Mayor of Santa Fe, appropriate representatives of the City of Santa Fe and the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and Fiesta organizers to engage in a respectful and principled deliberative dialogue guided by our shared core values to address these matters and work to define a process for genuine reconciliation to heal the wounds of the past and celebrate the beauty of our respectful cultures, traditions and peoples; and

WHEREAS, on September 21st of 2017, the All Pueblo Council of Governors passed and adopted a resolution and appointed the Chairman, the Chairman often Southern Pueblos, the Chairman of Eight Northern Pueblos, the Governor of

Tesuque and delegated former Governor of Cochiti, Regis Pecos of the Leadership Institute to facilitate and lead the negotiations for reconciliation; and

WHEREAS, since September of 2017, negotiations have been ongoing with the principles named above to outline the parameters and principles of resolution; and

WHEREAS, on December 14th, 2017, after initial meetings were held, the delegation reported that significant progress had transpired presenting to the All Pueblo Council of Governors a conceptual framework delineating a five-point plan for guide formal negotiations as outlined below; and

1. The re-enactment of the Entrada and associated script with pseudo

Pueblo representatives cannot under no circumstances continue

1. That an apology be given by the Church for the historic injustices inflicted and articulate the beauty of the transformation of the Pueblos celebrating the union of Pueblo way of life and Catholicism

 3. The parties contribute to a new proclamation celebrating all cultures, the communion of cultures and who we have become

4, That a Truth and Reconciliation Commission be established to plan and redesign a more inclusive and celebratory commemoration

5. That the City commission a piece of art that commemorates the reconciliation and the truth of past atrocities to learn from and that the commemorative piece of art reflect the spirit of peace as a gift to all future generations and be placed in the Santa Fe Plaza

WHEREAS, the All Pueblo Council of Governors approved the framework to guide the delegation in their negotiations, the delegation has used the formal endorsed document over the last six months; and

WHEREAS, on July 11, 2018, final negotiations were held in Santa Fe with Mayor Alan Webber on behalf of the City, Allen Sanchez on behalf of the Archbishop, representatives from the Santa Fe Fiesta Council, representatives from the

Caballeros and Regis Pecos on behalf of the All Pueblo Council of Governors; and

WHEREAS, the five point plan to guide negotiations for reconciliation as passed by the All Pueblo Council of Governors in December of 2017, was accepted in its entirety and that by virtue of the consensus of all parties engaged in negotiations, the five point plan has been accomplished.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the All Pueblo of Governors hereby approve and accept the negotiated outcome and authorizes the named representatives on behalf of the All Pueblo Council of Governors to proceed with final plans and make public at an appropriate time the outcome as desired by the Pueblo Governors on behalf of its people and its desire to usher in, a new era of relations for the sake of peace and co-existence and gift to all people and all future generation the spirit of our core values of love, respect and compassion for all.

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned officials of the All Pueblo Council of Governors hereby certify that the forgoing Resolution No, APCG 2018- was adopted at a duly called council meeting held on the 19 th day of July 2018, and at which time a quorum was present and the same was approved by a vote ofin favor, against,abstain,and absent

ALL PUEBLO COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

By:

APCG Chairman E. Paul Torres

ATTEST:

Governor Val Panteah, APCG Secreatry

1. Copyright 2020 The Evergreen State College. Teaching notes for this case are available at <http://nativecases.evergreen.edu>. Linda Moon Stumpff is a retired faculty member at The Evergreen State College. She teaches part time in Evergreen’s MPA program and co-leads the Enduring Legacies Native Cases Initiative with Barbara Leigh Smith. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)