

BENAVIDES' MEMORIAL  
OF 1630

*Translated by*

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## Game

There seems to be an unlimited stock of game. There are deer of many different species—some the size of large mules, with tails like mules; others just as large, but with tails like ordinary deer covered with such thick hair that they appear to have an oval shield over their haunches. They are so large and strong that the camp-master,<sup>89</sup> for display, had his coach drawn by two such deer which had been tamed when they were small. They pulled it with such spirit that it was necessary to put a pair of very gentle mules alongside them to slow them down. There are very many of the other medium-sized deer. The Indians utilize them for both food and clothing, because from the hides they make and tan such fine deer-skins that they sell them in Mexico City for five or six pesos. The cottontails and jack rabbits are countless, and the foxes, wolves, lions, wildcats and bears are also very numerous. There are mountain sheep of a very large type with very thick horns, which race up a wall, even one that is high and smooth, or up a steep cliff, just as if they were running up a ladder. When romping about, or when fleeing, they are wont to leap down from the highest cliffs, always landing head first, and they rise immediately with the utmost agility, as if nothing unusual had happened. That kingdom greatly abounds in all kinds of animals, and the herds we brought in from New Spain have already propagated in great numbers. This stock, which did not exist there previously, includes cattle, sheep—and the ewes generally bear three lambs—swine, mules and remarkable horses which are used especially by the military.

When the Indians have a general hunt, it is a very interesting sight to see. Four or five thousand of them get together and go along scaring out the animals from all the hills they have chosen, and they keep on encircling them in such a manner that at whatever point the animals try to escape they run into some of the men; and these keep closing the circle so that in a short time they have all of the game—animals of every kind—rounded up. Then those who are to do the killing enter the circle, and those on the outside draw

<sup>89</sup> According to Charles F. Lummis (*The Spanish Pioneers* [Chicago, 1893], p. 127), the term *maestro de campo* here employed by Benavides designates an officer equivalent in rank to our present-day colonel. Bandlerer (*The Gilded Men*, p. 229) calls this same officer a "master of ordnance." "Commander" is the meaning of the term, according to Hackett and Shelby (*Revolt of the Pueblo Indians*, p. 406), while the editors of the Ayer translation (page 37) maintains that "adjutant" is the nearest English equivalent of the term.

The rank of *maestro de campo* was created in 1534, and the officer who held it commanded a *tercio* which consisted of a number of armed companies—the exact number varying at different periods of Spanish history. The English word "campmaster," which designates a high-ranking sixteenth- or seventeenth-century military officer, seems to be an adequate translation of the term *maestro de campo*.

closer. Whatever is killed is divided among all, although special consideration is shown the captains.

## Inclacency of the Weather

The weather is of either extreme, for the winter is very severe, with so much snow, ice and cold that all the rivers, *esteros* and even the Rio del Norte freeze so hard that loaded wagons pass over them, and immense herds race across them as if over dry land. At such times we friars experience extreme difficulty crossing these rivers to minister to the pueblos, for since the rivers are frozen, they have a glassy and slippery surface that occasions terrible falls whether one be traveling on horseback or on foot. The remedy for this is to scatter some earth on top, so that a good foothold can be obtained. But it is impossible to find any earth, because everything is frozen so hard that even to dig a grave at the church a fire must first be kindled on top of the ground in order to thaw it, for it could not be opened even with crowbars. Suffice it to say that when we are saying Mass we keep a brazier on each side of the chalice; even with this precaution and with the heat given off by the large numbers present in the church, the wine still freezes. Every winter a great number of Indians out in the country are frozen, and many Spaniards have their ears, feet and hands frozen. During the summer, on the other hand, the heat is more intolerable than the cold in the winter. Thus, one sometimes seems to experience a complete shortage of breath, though in some provinces more than in others.

## The Great Apache Nation<sup>90</sup>

**W**HAT HAS BEEN SAID thus far should be enough to enable one to understand the nature of the pueblos of New Mexico, which are located along both banks of the Rio del Norte for a length of one hundred leagues. On all sides they are surrounded by the great Apache nation, which itself has, without any exaggeration, more people than all the other nations of New Spain combined, including the Mexican nation.<sup>91</sup> They are a very courageous and warlike people, and very valiant in battle. Even in their manner of talking they differ from the other nations, for

<sup>90</sup> Cf. *supra*, note 23.

<sup>91</sup> Modern investigators estimate that the Apaches numbered about five thousand in the year 1680. Cf. James Mooney, *The Aboriginal Populations of America North of Mexico* ("Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collection," LXXX [Washington, 1928]), p. 22.

the latter speak slowly and in a low tone, while the Apaches seem to fracture their skulls with their speech. They do not live in settlements or in houses, but in tents and in villages of rude huts,<sup>92</sup> and for this reason they move from one mountain ridge to another, looking for game. This is what they live on, although each main village has its own recognized territory in which they plant maize and other kinds of grain.

They dress in *gamuzas*, which are very skillfully tanned deerskins, elegant in their own way. The women dress attractively and modestly. The only form of idolatry they have is sun worship, but even this is not common among all of them, and they greatly ridicule the other nations that retain idols. Their custom is to have as many wives as they can support; and if they catch one of them in adultery, they carry out, of strict obligation, the law by cutting off her ears and nose and repudiating her. They are very obedient to their elders, whom they hold in high respect, and they teach and punish their children, in contrast to the other nations, who never punish them at all. They take great pride in telling the truth, and to be detected in a falsehood is considered a disgrace. Since they constitute a single nation, they all speak the same language, yet they are so scattered that it varies somewhat in a number of the villages, but not to the extent that they cannot easily understand one another.

Starting at its beginning, which, as we approach New Mexico, is the province of the Apaches of Perrillo, this nation runs westward from here as far as the South Sea,<sup>93</sup> a distance of more than three hundred leagues; and it continues on northward, without our having discovered any end to it in that direction, extending as far as the Strait of Anian.<sup>94</sup> In encircling New Mexico eastward, this nation extends for a distance of more than one hundred leagues before it again strikes the province of Perrillo, completing a circumference of more than three hundred leagues along the borders of New Mexico. This entire nation is so warlike that it has proved to be the crucible of Spanish valor, and for this reason they have high regard for the Spaniards. They say that only the Spaniards, and not the nations of settled Indians, deserve the title of men.

<sup>92</sup> The Spanish word employed here is *rancherías*.

<sup>93</sup> At this period the Pacific Ocean was often designated by the term *Mar del Sur*.

<sup>94</sup> The Strait of Anian was the long-sought northern waterway which, so it was imagined, connected the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It first appeared on a map constructed by Abraham Ortelius in 1564. This map, however, was very probably a second edition of an earlier one made by Giocomo Gastaldi two years before, but now lost (Henry R. Wagner, *The Cartography of the Northwest Coast of America to the Year 1800* [Berkeley, 1937], pp. 33, 57).

For further information on this "northern mystery," see the chapter entitled "Imaginary Geography" in Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast* (San Francisco, 1884), I, 32-136; and Henry R. Wagner, *Spanish Voyages of the Northwest Coast of America in the Sixteenth Century* (San Francisco, 1929), pp. 125-127.

## Beginning of The Conversion of The Apaches

I began the conversion of the Apache nation along their northern border at the villages of Captain Quina,<sup>95</sup> who is well known for his belligerent nature. I planted the first crosses there, and another friar continued the work.<sup>96</sup> After the captain and his wife and children had been baptized, they rebelled and tried to murder the priest who was instructing them in the Faith. Though they already had their arrows pointed at him, they did not dare shoot. They fled from the village and left the priest there alone. So then he left them for the time being, but they are again being reduced to peace. This is what always happens in the conversions at the beginning.

## Conversion of the Xila Apaches<sup>97</sup> and Remarkable Hieroglyphic of an Apache Captain

Returning, then, to the beginning of this Apache nation along the part closest to the province of Perrillo, one reaches the province of the Xila Apaches, fourteen leagues distant from the town of Senecú de Senecú, in the province of the Pirós. Our Lord was pleased that its chief captain, named Sanaba, should be converted by hearing me preach several times at Senecú, a place he used frequent. He himself preached to the people in his villages, with the result that the entire village in which he lived has been converted, and little by little he is converting the others which a subject to him. At present we have a friar<sup>98</sup> there who is catechizing the people and gathering them into pueblos.

I cannot refrain from mentioning here two extraordinary things which happened to me in this mission, and from them Your Majesties will see what is going on there. One is, that while I was on my way to this pueblo of Xila to instruct its inhabitants, their Captain Sanaba learned of it and came fourteen leagues to the pueblo of San Antonio de Senecú to meet me. After I had presented him with

<sup>95</sup> An account of the conversion, apostasy and final repentance of this captain is found in the revised *Memorial* (Hodge, Hammond and Rey, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-91).

<sup>96</sup> From the revised *Memorial* we learn that this friar was Fray Bartolomé Romo (*ibid.*, p. 90).

<sup>97</sup> Benavides seems to have been the first author to use the term Xila (modern Gil He applied it to the Indians then occupying a district in southwestern New Mexico, about fifty-five miles west of Socorro. The river which rises in this area was later given the name Gila. Most likely the Xila Apaches were the group which later came to be known as the Mimbres, Mogollones and Warm Spring Apaches. The term Gila no longer has any ethnic signification.

<sup>98</sup> According to the revised *Memorial*, this friar was Fray Martín del Espíritu. See (*ibid.*, p. 83).

what I could, he ordered a servant to open up a little bundle that he had brought along. He took out of it a folded *gamuza*, that is, a tanned deer skin, and presented it to me. Not knowing what was inside it, and believing he was merely making me a present of the *gamuza*, I told him that he already knew I did not want them to give me anything; that all I wanted of them was that they should adore the Lord of heaven and earth with all their hearts. Smiling, he told me to unfold the *gamuza* so that I could see what it contained. I did so and observed that it was very white and large; that in the middle of it there was a sun painted green, surmounted by a cross; and that under the sun there was a moon painted dark gray and likewise surmounted by a cross. Although I got some idea of its significance, I asked him the meaning of that painting. He replied thus: "Father, until now we had not known any benefactors as great as the sun and the moon, because the sun affords us warmth and light by day and makes our plants grow, while the moon gives us light at night. So we used to adore these two as we would one who had rendered us many benefits, not realizing that there was anything better. But, now that you have taught us that God is the Lord and creator of the sun and moon and of all things, and that the cross is the sign of God, I have ordered the cross painted over the sun and over the moon so that you will understand that we do what you teach us, and above all that we do not forget to adore God and His holy Cross."

For everything may God be blessed and praised! Only one who has had experience with conversions knows the spiritual joy felt by a friar when, on such occasions, he sees the fruits his labor has yielded; and he considers as well rewarded the dangers he has encountered in the missions. From this, too, one will quickly recognize the natural talent for deduction which God has imparted to this nation. For I do not know if the natural philosophers of antiquity could have advanced better arguments than those given by this Indian—a barbarian in our opinion—to persuade himself to adore our true and universal Creator, Redeemer and Lord.

## Conversion of the Navajo Apaches<sup>89</sup>

LEAVING THIS PROVINCE of the Xila Apaches, one continues in the same direction along the western

<sup>89</sup> The Navajo (modern Navaho) are considered a division of the Arapaskan family. In the course of history, however, they have received infusions of several other stocks. At the time of the Spanish conquest of New Mexico, the Navajos were not numerically of great significance, but after 1550 their numbers steadily increased by a process of wholesale adoption of Keresan, Shoshonean, Tanoan and Yuman peoples. As a result the

edge of the settlements; and advancing northward along the border for a distance of more than fifty leagues occupied by villages of the Xila jurisdiction, one arrives at the province of the Navajo Apaches. Although these belong to the same Apache nation as the mentioned above, they are subject and subordinate to another captain, and lead a different kind of life. The above-mentioned had no cultivated fields but lived by the hunt—although lately have broken ground for them and taught them to sow. But the Navajos are very skillful farmers, for the word *navajo* means "cultivated fields."<sup>100</sup> This province is the most warlike of the entire Apache nation, and here the Spaniards have certainly shown their valor. This mountain range runs along for another fifty or sixty leagues, and for the entire distance it is covered with rock alum. All these nations that live in settlements and are Christian have love for painting; and in order to paint their clothing they have need of rock alum, which can be found only in these mountains. Whenever they go after it, two or three thousand Indians band together; and the aforesaid Navajo Apaches go out to meet them and do battle in defense of their country. As a result of this, very large numbers are killed, unless it happens at that particular time that the Apaches have gone hunting in some of the other mountain ranges. But when they find out the others have come to take rock alum, they unite for the express purpose of coming to war on the Christian Indians to avenge the invasion of their land.

Navaho are a very composite people, and now a very numerous one. At present constitute the largest Indian tribe in the United States, numbering almost fifty thousand. The original habitat of this people extended from the San Juan Mountains in Colorado south to the San Mateo Mountains in New Mexico; and from Jemez, west to the Francisco Mountains in Arizona.

Little more is known of the early attempts to Christianize the Navajos beyond which Benavides relates in his two memorials. In fact, not much is known of the history of the Navajo before the American period. Fray Francisco de Zamora and Fray Alonso de Lugo seem to have labored among this people prior to 1601. Early missionary efforts, however, were not very fruitful. Fray Juan Menchero, who went to the Navajo in 1746, was the only friar who attained any measure of success. But even the missions he established at Cebollera and Encinal survived but a few years. For the hundred years the Navajos lived by pillaging settlements throughout the Southwest they were finally subdued by Col. Christopher (Kit) Carson in 1868.

On the mission history of the Navajo, see Marian Douglas, O.F.M., "Missions in Navaho-Land," *World Mission*, IV (1953), 219-227.

A fine guide to the vast amount of material which has been written about Navaho is available in *A Bibliography of the Navaho Indians* (New York, 1940) Clyde Kluckhohn and Katherine Spencer.

<sup>100</sup> On the very complicated problem of the origin and use of the term Navajo see Edgar L. Hewett, "Origin of the Name Navaho," *American Anthropologist*, N.S. (1906), 193; Bernard Halley, O.F.M., "Navaho or Navajo?" *The American*, VI (185-90).

<sup>101</sup> This was a low-grade, naturally occurring alum used by the Navajos, Moquis and Zuñi as a specialized mordant in dyeing processes. It is still gathered from under rocks in the flat reservation country of New Mexico. (Stella Young, *Navajo Dyes* [Chilocco, 1940], pp. 8, 18).

They are so numerous that more than thirty thousand Indians<sup>102</sup> with bows and arrows gather together in two days. This is scarcely an exaggeration, because at times the Spaniards have gone there to wage war on them for murdering so many Christian Indians, and, although they attacked at daybreak and without the least warning, they have always found countless numbers crowded into the fields.

They have their own peculiar type of underground dwelling places,<sup>103</sup> as well as a certain kind of hut for storing their grain, and they always live in that same place. Now, in the month of September of last year, 1629, our Lord saw fit that I should pacify them. With this in view, I founded a friary and church in the pueblo of Santa Clara,<sup>104</sup> of the Teoas nation, whose inhabitants were Christians. Living along the border, they suffered a great deal from these Apaches. I was very anxious to make peace between them, because it would result in the Navajos' conversion; and, as a matter of fact, it so happened. As this was something out of the ordinary, and as Your Majesty may be pleased to know how it took place, an account of it follows.

During the month of September of last year, 1629, I was taking care of the above-mentioned Friary of Santa Clara in the pueblo of Capoo, which was the tenth and last pueblo I founded for the honor and glory of God in those missions.<sup>105</sup> It was most frequently the victim of attacks from the Navajo Apaches.

<sup>102</sup> It is now estimated that the Navajos numbered about eight thousand in the year 1680 (Mooney, *op. cit.*, p. 22).

<sup>103</sup> I.e., the Navaho hogan, a rather rude cabin made of small tree trunks set upright, and branches which filled in the intervening spaces, the whole being covered with mud and earth (Cosmos Mindeloff, "Navaho Houses," *Seventeenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* [Washington, 1898], II, 463-517; James Brewer, "Notes on How to Build a Hogan," *Southwestern Monuments, Monthly Report* [June, 1936], 485-488).

<sup>104</sup> Santa Clara Mission was located at the Tewa pueblo of Capoo, about twenty-five miles west of Santa Fe. It was probably founded in 1628, and for a brief period it served as Benavides' headquarters. In 1680 it had a population of approximately three hundred. Modern Santa Clara occupies almost the exact site of the ancient settlement, which was destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt (Bandelier, *Final Report*, II, 54 ff.).

<sup>105</sup> "From the fact that Benavides remained in New Mexico for some months after his successor, Estevan de Perea, arrived with the thirty priests and lay brothers in the spring of 1629, and that various missions were established during the latter part of that year, it is not positively known which of the ten convents Benavides actually founded. We know that there were eleven churches in the province in 1617, which were San Juan, San Ildefonso and Nambé (Tewa); Galisteo (Tano); Santo Domingo and Sia (Keres); Sandia and Isleta (Tiwa); Chiliti (Manzano-Tiwa); Santa Fe; and possibly San Lázaro, since we have mention of a guardian there in 1613. By the end of 1629, numerous additional missions had been founded, including: Taos; Picurines; Santa Clara; San Cristóbal (both San Cristóbal and San Lázaro, noted above, later became *visitas*); San Felipe; San Diego de Jemez; San José de Jemez; Quarai; Abó; Humana; San Isidro (temporary); Socorro; Seneci; Sevilleta (?); Acoma; Zuñi missions; and the Hopi missions. Taijque and San Marcos had convents in the 1630's" (Hodge, Hammond and Key, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310).

Seeing that I could never catch one of these to offer him gifts and ask him to return to his land to propose to his captains that we discuss terms of peace, I took a bold step and determined to send twelve of my Christian Indians to them, men of talent and courage. With this end in view, I called together the captains and elders of the pueblo and announced to them my desire that this peace should be brought about, in order to prevent the loss of so many lives; to make it possible for them to trade with each other and share the profits of each other's labors; and, most of all, by this means to obtain their conversion, which was my main objective. All were of this same opinion. Naming the most talented of the twelve Indian as captain,<sup>106</sup> they entrusted him with the embassy of peace, according to their custom. That is, they gave him an arrow, with a colored feather instead of flint; and a tobacco-filled reed<sup>107</sup> which they had already smoked, together with another feather, which indicated how much they had smoked from it. The arrow—that gentle dart—was to be shot as a sign of peace, as they were approaching; and coming within sight of the village. The reed was for the purpose of inviting them to smoke so that the message of peace might spread to the interior. I also gave him my token of peace, which was a rosary for the captain, and a request for an interview to discuss with him these peaceful proposals.

That all this should turn out as successfully as it did, by chance it took place on the eve of the feast of the Stigmata of Our Father St. Francis, that is, September 17 of last year, 1629. I told them to come to hear Mass on the following day. All the people came there begging God for success in that undertaking and asking Our Father St. Francis to be its patron; and thereupon I dedicated to him the mission and province. After hearing Mass, which was sung with all solemnity, these Indians came forth with very great courage and spirit; and, having asked my blessing, they started out on their journey from the church itself. God knows how my heart ached. I realized the certain peril to which I was exposing those Indians. For when an undertaking proves a failure, envious rivals are never

<sup>106</sup> The revised *Memorial* gives Don Pedro as the name of this gifted captain (*ibid.* p. 86).

<sup>107</sup> From time immemorial smoking was a common ceremonial practice among the American Indians. The smoking of tobacco or some similar herb accompanied every tribal deliberation of any importance. Cane cigarettes, here described as "a tobacco-filled reed," were also offered as votive gifts to the deities. Thousands of them have been found in the shrine-caves of Arizona. Pipes were used by many tribes, but the smoker of the sacred cane cigarette was the more common practice in the Southwest. The method of smoking survived among the Pima of Arizona until quite recent times. C. Ralph Linton, *The Use of Tobacco Among the North American Indians* ("Chicago Field Museum Anthropology Leaders," No. 15 [Chicago, 1924]); E. F. Garetter, "Bar Tobacco Utilization and Cultivation in the American Southwest," *American Anthropologist*, N.S., XLV (1934), 320-325.

lacking to criticize it as rash; and if it succeeds, there are few to praise it. But I always had complete faith in God our Lord, that He would protect them from their enemies.

Having arrived within sight of the first village on the boundary of that indomitable and ferocious nation, they shot the marked arrow they were carrying. In this place there lived the chief and bravest captain of all those frontiers, whose cousin was the cacique who governed all of them and who had come there for the sole purpose of recruiting men in order to inflict great injury on the Christians. Upon seeing it the enemy answered with another of the same type. Thereupon they began to approach, although slowly and with misgivings. As soon as they arrived, our captain gave his message to their leader and presented him with the reed of tobacco. He also gave him my rosary and delivered his message in behalf of his captains and myself. Since he had never before seen a rosary, he asked what was the meaning of so many beads on that string. Spontaneously, yet with subtlety, our ambassador replied that since there were so many captains, the priest in this manner gave each of them his word that he was going to be their friend. This reply greatly pleased the captain, who, heaving a deep sigh, said that he was very sorry they had come to offer peace, but that, since it was such a good thing and since they had brought it to his house, he could not refuse it. He said, however, that he was deeply offended at the Christians, and that at this particular time he had matters so arranged that he would have taken dire vengeance on them, but that now he accepted the peace and even desired it. So he immediately sent the arrow and the reed of tobacco to his cacique and kept my rosary, wearing it about his neck. Suspecting there might be some double-dealing in this, he told our men that, although he was offering peace in the name of all, he personally wished to send out from me and from all the Christians if we were truly offering it to them, and that for this reason he wished to come to our pueblo to visit us.

I was informed of this by one of our men, who came in all haste, and I had more than fifteen hundred persons go out to welcome him. I awaited him at the church, which on my instructions had been arranged nicely, with many lights burning because it was already night when they arrived. And as this nation is proud and spirited, I judged it better to receive this captain and those accompanying him in a manner different from that in which we received other nations, with whom, at the beginning, we sit on the ground, thus conforming ourselves to their simple ways until we can teach them better manners. But since the Apache nation is so haughty, I thought it better to deviate from this practice. So I ordered

a chair placed on a rug close to the altar and, seated there, I received him.

All the people of the pueblo came along ahead of him, and among the Christian captains came the Apache captain with four other of his captains. As soon as they had entered the church and recited a prayer at the altar, the chief captain of the Christians came up to me and kissed my feet—a thing which did not much displease me, although I had not anticipated it—and the strangers, following his example, did in like manner. After greeting me, the chief said that those [our] captains had gone to offer him peace on my behalf and on behalf of their own captains; and to be more certain of this, he had come personally to investigate. Immediately the chief captain of the pueblo arose and offered his own bow and arrows to the Apache, saying that there, before God present on that altar and before me, His priest, he was giving him those weapons as a pledge of his word that he would never violate the peace; and so he placed them on the altar. In order that he [the Apache] might see that all were of like opinion, he [the chief captain] asked the people if they all agreed to what he had said. With a loud cry, they replied that they did. Then the Apache captain selected from his quiver the arrow he considered most suitable, made of white flint and very sharp; and in the presence of all he pronounced these words in a loud voice: "I do not know who this one is whom you call God, but since you invoke him as witness and assurance of your promise that you will not, under any condition, break your word, he must be a person of great power, authority and goodness. So to that God, whoever he may be, I also, with this arrow in the hands of this priest, give my word and promise in the name of all my people, that on my part and on the part of my people peace and friendship will never be lacking." Accepting the arrow from him, I said that if he wished me to tell him who God was, he would enjoy hearing me, and all the more so after pledging to Him his word. He told me that he would.

So in very few words and in his own manner, I explained who God was: the Creator and Lord of all created things, Who had died on the cross in order to redeem us from eternal sufferings. I demonstrated all this to him by means of the painting on the altar, and I told him that whoever did not adore Him and was not baptized would be condemned and go to burn in those eternal torments. Because the word of God is so efficacious, and because it touched his heart so deeply, he turned with great emotion toward all the people; heaving a deep sigh, he said to them in a very loud voice: "O Teoas, how I envy you! You have here one who teaches you who God is, and things so good; while we have no such one, but live and

die, going about these fields and mountains like deer and jack rabbits. Herewith I declare that I adore this God of Whom this priest speaks; and now that I know Him, I offer peace and give my word that I shall maintain it with greater determination."<sup>9</sup>

Tears flowing from his eyes, he fell upon his knees to kiss my feet. Whereupon I raised him up and embraced him with all the kindness I could, and then all the Christian captains also embraced him. I took this opportunity to have the bells rung and the trumpets and flageolets sounded—a thing which he enjoyed very much because it was the first time he had heard it. I immediately hung those arrows there on the altar as trophies of the divine word, even though it was announced by so humble a minister, and in this manner I declared it to the people of the pueblo so that they might render thanks to the divine Majesty for everything. Then the Christian captains took the guests away in order to lodge them in their homes, and I gave them what gifts I could.

The following morning, as it happened to be Saturday, the bells rang for the Mass in honor of Our Lady, which the entire pueblo attends. The Apache captain also came, together with his own men and the rest of the Christians. When he discovered that my name was Alonso, he asked my permission to take that name. I told him he would be given that name when he was baptized. From that very moment, however, all called him Don Alonso. I vested for Mass with the best vestments available, and he marveled at seeing the devotion with which all the people knelt at prayer. Before Mass I married some Indians; and, although they [the Navajo Apaches] have as many wives as they can support, he thought it only proper that Christians should have but one and should promise before God to observe conjugal fidelity.

I was anxious to start Mass; and since he was not as yet baptized, I told him that he could not see God in the Mass until he was, and that he should go out for a walk with his men while I was celebrating it. To this he replied that he already considered himself a Christian; that he adored God with all his heart, even more than all those assembled there; and that therefore he also wished to see Him. When I answered that he could not see Him until after he had been baptized, he ordered his companions to leave, but said that under no condition would he do so. To humor him, I ordered the chanters to sing the *Salve*<sup>108</sup> in all solemnity, with organ accompaniment and with trumpets and flageolets. Garbed in the sacred

<sup>108</sup> The *Salve Regina* or, as it is known in English, the "Hail, Holy Queen" is the most celebrated of the four anthems of the Roman Breviary in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Its authorship is now generally attributed to Hermann Contractus (1013-054). Since the Middle Ages the singing of this anthem has everywhere been a feature of evening devotions. It is sung to an exquisite plain melody of great antiquity.

vestments, I sang the oration at the altar and, having finished it, sat on the chair and again addressed to him some words concerning the mystery of creation and redemption, with the result that he became more and more confirmed in the Faith.

Some Spanish soldiers had assembled there to attend Mass, and he said that he wished to arrange with the Spaniards the same peace that he had established with the Teoas. Therefore, through me, he gave an arrow to a Spanish captain who was present, as evidence of his pledge that he would not violate the peace. In like manner our Spaniard, drawing his sword from its scabbard, handed it to me in the presence of the Indian as proof that he was offering him peace in the name of God, and that he was also accepting the peace which was offered. Just as before, all was placed upon the altar and offered to God as judge and witness of that action, which for the second time was solemnized with the ringing of bells and the playing of trumpets and flageolets. With this he was greatly comforted, and he said that the truth of our holy Catholic Faith was quite evident since it was celebrated with such solemnity, and that they themselves lived like brute animals of the field. Thereupon I had some Christian captains take him to their home, and then I said Mass for the people. Afterwards he showed that he had been quite slighted at this, because he was desirous of seeing God in the Mass.

He and his companions remained there three or four days, listening with devotion and love to the teachings of our holy Catholic Faith, and observing and noting the happy lives the Christians were leading. The fear of the pains of hell particularly made a very deep impression on their souls, and they said that in any event they wished to become Christians. They were very fond of their wives and children and of members of their nation, and it would grieve them exceedingly if these should go to hell because they were not Christians. For this reason they begged me to go to their villages, if only for ten days, in order to explain to their people what they had heard from me. These things were of such a marvelous nature that he could not explain them, nor would his people believe them merely on his word. Finally he left, indicating that he would return after a moon and a half (their method of computing time).

In order to confirm the peace, he wished to bring all the women and children from those neighboring villages, together with large quantities of dressed deerskins and rock alum, so that a big fair might be held which would last three days, and thus a strong friendship would be established between them. He assured them that from that moment they might enter his country to hunt or to do whatever they pleased, and they would be treated as very good

friends. This proved true, because previously one could not travel a quarter of a league into their territory except at great risk, and every day they murdered some Christians. But after this peace had been established, even the old women used to go out there in quest of firewood; and if they came across any Apaches, the latter provided them with a wholly safe passage and shared with them the game they had killed. A very zealous friar<sup>109</sup> is continuing the conversion and pacification of this people, and he will be able to do this much more successfully than I.

This province has a border of some fifty leagues, but it extends westward for more than three hundred, and we do not know where it ends. Of all the provinces, this one has caused most grief and worry to New Mexico, both because its inhabitants are so warlike and brave, and also because it has a population of more than two hundred thousand souls,<sup>110</sup> as the Spaniards have observed on the various occasions they have gone there to fight.

## The Vaquero Apaches of the Buffalo Herd<sup>111</sup>

WHEN LEAVING THE PROVINCE of the Navajo Apaches and turning to the right and eastward, we come to the province of the Vaquero Apaches, which extends in that direction and reaches back, encircling the settlements for a distance of more than one hundred and fifty leagues before it reaches those of Perrillo, where we began upon entering New Mexico.

This whole nation and province lives on cattle, which they call buffalo<sup>112</sup> and which resemble our cattle in size but are quite different

<sup>109</sup> Very likely this friar was Fray Martín de Arvide (Hodge, Hammond and Rey, *op. cit.*, p. 96).

<sup>110</sup> Cf. *supra*, note 102.

<sup>111</sup> The term Vaquero Apache was employed by the early Spaniards of the Southwest to designate the Apaches who followed the roaming buffalo herds through northeastern New Mexico, western Texas and adjacent parts of Oklahoma and Kansas; and who subsisted chiefly on buffalo meat. They were probably the same Indians who later came to be known as the Mescaleros, Jicarillas, Farones, Lipanes and Llaneros.

<sup>112</sup> The *Relación Postrera de Sicalá* makes clear the importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Plains Indians. "These Indians live or sustain themselves entirely from the cattle [buffalo], for they neither grow nor harvest maize. With the skins they build their houses; with the skins they clothe and shoe themselves; from the skins they make ropes and also obtain wool. With the sinews they make thread, with which they sew their clothes and also their tents. From the bones they shape awls. The dung they use for firewood, since there is no other fuel in that land. The bladders they use as jugs and drinking containers. They sustain themselves on their meat, eating it slightly roasted and heated over the dung. Some they eat raw; taking it in their teeth, they pull with one hand, and in the other they hold a large flint knife and cut off mouthfuls. Thus they swallow it, half chewed, like birds. They eat raw fat without warming it. They drink the blood just as it comes out of the cattle. Sometimes they

in form. The legs are short and as if disjointed; the humped back and chest are very high; the horns are very short and sharp and pointed upward; and the hair of the forelock is very heavy and curly, covering the eyes. They have the same kind of hair on the chin and knees. All are of a dark brown or black color, and only rarely is one seen with any white spot. Their meat has a better flavor and is more healthful than that of our cows, and the tallow is much better, too. They do not bellow like our bulls, but grun like pigs; and their tails are not long, but rather short, with little hair on them. The hair is not like that of our cattle, but curly like very fine wool, and from it blankets<sup>113</sup> of a good quality are made; and from the new hair, fine vicuña hats are made. Clothing is lined with the skins of the calves as though they were the skin of martens.

I have treated of this stock at such great length because the herds are so numerous and extensive that we have found no end to them. We have heard that they can be found all the way from the South Sea to the North Sea,<sup>114</sup> and in such vast numbers that the fields are thick with them. These herds alone would suffice to make a prince very wealthy, if a way could be found to move them elsewhere. There appear to be herds of more than forty thousand bulls with not even one cow among them, because they always keep by themselves until the mating season. They do not permit themselves to be rounded up, even though for this purpose some of our tame stock is turned loose among them. For this reason, the Spaniards catch the little ones at calving time and raise them with goats. Since this stock is so plentiful and sheds its hair every year the wool is left on the ground and the winds blow it in such large quantities into the trees or into the various ravines that it could enrich many persons, but it is all lost.

All the Vaquero Apaches make their living from this stock. For this purpose, they cautiously draw near the watering place; and, having painted their faces<sup>115</sup> and, with the mud of the place smeared their bodies, stretch out and hide in the deep trails made by the cattle; and when the buffalo go by, they shoot at them the

drink it later, raw and cold. They have no other food" (George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition, 1540-1542* [Albuquerque, 1940] pp. 310-311).

<sup>113</sup> The term here employed is *jerquetas*, which means cloth of a coarse, rough texture used to designate the Atlantic Ocean.

<sup>115</sup> The substance with which the Apaches painted their faces was evidently some inorganic material derived from an iron-bearing mineral—probably the earthy, yellowish-red type of iron ore known as hematite (iron sesquioxide). Hematite in its solid form was much used by the Indians as a red chalk. It was also pulverized and used as red ochre in several painting and dyeing processes. Red was the most prized color for facial decoration, and hematite mixed with grease or saliva was utilized for this purpose.

arrows which they carry. Although these cattle are very ferocious and swift, they are stupid; and when they find they have been wounded, they fall down after a few steps.<sup>116</sup> Afterwards, the Indians skin them and carry off the hides, tongues, loins, and also the sinews which they use to sew and to make strings for their bows. They tan the hides in two ways. Some they tan without removing the hair, and the hides then resemble plush velvet. These are used as beds and in summer as cloaks. Others they dress without the hair, and then them down. From these they make tents and other things they are accustomed to use. They trade these hides throughout the entire region and in this way gain their livelihood. These skins provide the dress commonly worn by both Indians and Spaniards. They use them not only for making clothing, but also for sacks, tents, cuirasses, footwear, and many other useful purposes.

Although so many of these cattle are killed each year, their number, instead of dropping off, increases daily, for they cover the fields and seem to be inexhaustible. These Indians go out through the surrounding provinces, using these skins to trade and bargain. In this connection I cannot but relate a practice which is ridiculous and somewhat incredible. When these Indians go off to trade and bargain, the entire villages go along, including the wives and children. They live in tents made from these buffalo skins, which are very thin and well tanned. The tents are carried by packs of dogs harnessed in their little packsaddles.<sup>117</sup> The dogs are of medium size, and in each pack there are usually five hundred of them, one ahead of the other. On their backs the people carry their merchandise, which they exchange for cotton fabric<sup>118</sup> and for other things they need.

As has been said, this province of the Vaquero Apaches encircles the settlements of New Mexico on the eastern frontier for more than one hundred and fifty leagues and stretches out in the same

<sup>116</sup> For a detailed description of the various methods of hunting buffalo employed by the Indians, see Edward D. Branch, *The Hunting of the Buffalo* (New York, 1929), pp. 26-51.

<sup>117</sup> This dog-drawn sledge is called a travois, and is constructed from the poles and hide covering of the tipi. One pole is attached to each side of the dog by means of a rope harness in a manner which allows the upper ends to rest on the animal's shoulders, while the lower ends drag along the ground behind. The tipi cover is then folded and tied between the poles to form a sort of litter on which other articles can be carried. Thus rigged, the dogs can bear a load of from seventy-five to one hundred pounds (Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 802-803).

<sup>118</sup> The cultivation of cotton was quite widespread among the Indians of the Southwest in spite of the fact that the soil was not very favorable for this crop. The art of making cotton cloth was highly developed especially among the Hopi Pueblos. Almost all the early explorers of the region mention the cotton mantas that were worn by this tribe. Cotton cloth, thread and seeds have been found in prehistoric burial mounds several places in the Southwest. Cf. F. L. Lewton, *The Cotton of the Hopi Indians* ("Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collection," IX, No. 6 [Washington, 1912]).

direction for more than one hundred. It is all very densely settled with villages of the aforesaid tents and an infinite number of people. It has pleased our Lord that their conversion and pacification should begin with the good treatment and kindness which the friars extend them in their neighboring *doctrinas*. When their chief captains heard that the Spaniards in the town of Santa Fe had the Mother of God—this being a sculptured image depicting the Dormition<sup>119</sup> of the Virgin, Our Lady, which I had brought there and which was beautifully adorned in a chapel—they came to see her; became very fond of her and promised to become Christians. Especially their chief spoke to her with great devotion after his own fashion. Then the demon, seeing that in this way he was being deprived of the dominion he enjoyed, had recourse to one of the wiles he is accustomed to employ in his defense, choosing as his instrument the greed of our Spanish governor.<sup>120</sup> In order to obtain slaves to sell in New Spain, the governor sent a brave Indian cap-

<sup>119</sup> The Spanish text reads "una Imagen de vulto del Tránsito de la Virgen nuestra Señora." Angelico Chavez, O.F.M., questions Mrs. Ayer's rendition of "Tránsito" as "death." Such a translation, he says, "is correct literally, but wrong liturgically. In employing the word 'tránsito,' Fr. Benavides, by metonymy, was merely using one of the three ideas celebrated in the title and feast of the Assumption: The Death or Passing Away of Mary, her Assumption into Heaven, and her Coronation." (*Our Lady of the Conquest* [Santa Fe, 1948], p. 34). The "possibility and even the probability" that the famous image of Our Lady of the Conquest, under whose patronage Vargas carried out the reconquest of New Mexico, and the image brought to Santa Fe by Benavides are identical, says the same writer, can not be lightly dismissed. "Here is a deduction which, if proved certain someday, would not surprise me at all. The original Parroquia of Santa Fe, the mud hut which Fr. Benavides found in 1625, was dedicated in honor of Mary's Assumption; the statue that he brought represented the Assumption; the new substantial Parroquia that was built during his term as Curato, and in which he enshrined the statue, was most likely entitled 'of the Assumption,' since the new church merely supplanted the older inadequate structure. . . . The deduction, then, is that our so-called 'de Vargas statue' may be none other than the Benavides statue of the Assumption which he brought in 1625 to the Santa Fe Parroquia of the same name, the principal and only parish church of the Spaniards for more than a century. Sometime during the next thirty years a Rosary Confraternity was founded which adopted the 'Patroness of the Kingdom and its Villa of Santa Fe' as its visible rallying point; in that period, or in the decades prior to the 1680 Indian Revolt, the little statue was mutilated and the puppet-arms were attached, in order that she might be dressed as 'Our Lady of the Rosary' holding an Infant and a rosary. . . . Therefore, while referring to her as *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* because their Rosary Confraternity revolved around it, the pre-Revolt inhabitants also remembered her as one who had come in the days of their pioneer forebears and called her, in addition, '*La Conquistadora*'" (*ibid.*, pp. 35-36). It is Fr. Chavez' opinion, then, that the statue brought by Benavides, the statue saved from destruction in 1680 and carried back to Santa Fe from El Paso by Vargas in 1693, and the statue of Our Lady of the Rosary which is still venerated in the Lady Chapel of the Santa Fe Cathedral, are one and the same. Cf. also Angelico Chavez, O.F.M., *La Conquistadora. The Autobiography of an Ancient Statue* (Paterson, 1954).

<sup>120</sup> Admiral Don Philippe Sotelo Ossorio was Governor of New Mexico from 1625 to 1629, and Captain Don Francisco Manuel de Silva Nieto from 1629 to 1632. Benavides is evidently referring to one of these men—which one, we can not determine (Lansing B. Bloom, "The Governors of New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review*, X [1935], 152-157).

tain, who was an enemy of that faction, to bring back as many captives as he could. This infernal minister happened to go to the village of the chief captain, who had promised the Virgin that he would become a Christian, together with all his people. He fought with the captain and killed him, as well as many of his people, for he had taken a great many Indian warriors along with him. As the slain captain was wearing about his neck a rosary I had given him, he held it out in front of him, beseeching his assailant for its sake and for the sake of the Mother of God not to kill him; but this did not suffice to keep the tyrant from venting his cruelty. Some captives were brought back to the governor. Though he refused to accept them on account of the tumult this event had occasioned, and though he wanted to hang the one he had sent on the mission, nevertheless his greed was quite apparent. This provoked a revolt throughout this entire province, although once more, thank God, we are succeeding in pacifying it, and the Indians already know who is to blame, and that God must be adored above all things.

It seems to me that the foregoing will suffice to make known this Apache nation, which, as has been said, encompasses the hundred leagues along the banks of the Rio del Norte, where the settlements of New Mexico are to be found. These are the Teoas, Tanos, Hemes, Tioas [*sic*], Piros, Tompiras and Queres nations. On the outer edge, from east to west, and from north to south, the Apache nation extends so far that we have never found its limits. The climate is the same as that we described when treating of our Christian settlements—extremely cold in winter and extremely hot in summer. All possible efforts are being made to effect their conversion. God knows when their hour will arrive.

## Miraculous Conversion of the Xumana Nation<sup>121</sup>

LEAVING all this western section and going forth from the town of Santa Fe, the center of New Mexico,

<sup>121</sup> Xumana is spelled "Humano" in some documents, but the modern spelling is "Jumano." The precise ethnic signification of the term is far from clear. In the course of history it has been applied to a number of tribes of Caddoan stock. The word is now used as a generic name for several Indian bands of diverse cultural affiliation, all of whom employed a distinctive type of body decoration.

In 1582 Espejo gave the name Jumanas to a group of Indians he found living near the junction (La Junta) of the Rio Conchos and the Rio Grande in what is now the Mexican state of Chihuahua. In 1598 Oñate encountered a group of Xumana settlements much farther north, in the Salinas district of eastern New Mexico. Very probably these settlements belonged to the Tompiro group, who shared the Pueblo culture but spoke the Tompiro language. It likewise seems probable that one of these settlements was located at the site of what is now known as the Grand Quivira Ruins; and that here in 1627 Benavides founded the Mission of San Isidro.

situated at 37°, and advancing eastward more than 112 leagues through the nation of the Vaquero Apaches, we come upon the Xumana nation. Since their conversion was so miraculous, it is only proper to describe how it came about.

Years ago, while a friar named Fray Juan de Salas was going about engaged in the conversion of the Tompira and Salinero Indians—the largest salt deposits in the world<sup>122</sup> are in their territory, which on that side borders the Xumanas—a war was being waged between them. When Father Fray Juan de Salas returned in quest of the Salineros, the Xumanas said that those who came back in search of the poor were good people. Therefore they took a liking to the priest and begged him to go to live among them, and every year they came to seek him. Since he was also busy with the Christians—for he was proficient in languages and a very successful missionary—and since there were not enough friars, I continued to put off the Xumanas, who were asking for him, until God should send more laborers. As a matter of fact, He did send them last year, 1629, when He inspired Your Majesty to order the Viceroy of New Spain to send us thirty friars. These were brought by their custos, Father Fray Estévan de Perea. We immediately sent that priest [Father Salas] there with a companion, Father Fray Diego López, and those same Indians went along with them as their guides.

Fray Francisco de Letrado was assigned as minister of this pueblo of the Xumanas in 1629, and it was he who built the first church and friary there. In the revised *Memorial* Benavides tells us that after he returned to Spain, Fray Ascensio de Zárate and Fray Pedro de Ortega "came to the conversions of the Xumanas" (Hodge, Hammond and Rey, *op. cit.*, p. 96). By 1641 San Isidro had become an outmission of Abó, but in 1660 it again had a resident missionary in the person of Fray Diego de Santander. The mission was abandoned about 1670, probably because of the fury and frequency of Apache raids. This group of the Xumanas did not take part in the Pueblo Revolt, and in 1683 they sent a delegation to El Paso to ask that missionaries come to them.

Besides the Xumanas of La Junta and those of Mission San Isidro, there was another large group which in Benavides' time inhabited the plains about three hundred miles east of the pueblo of Xumana. As early as 1622 Fray Juan de Salas, while minister at Isleta, went among a group of Xumanas which inhabited the plains far to the east and was distinct from the San Isidro group. From 1630 to 1632 this same friar, together with Fray Diego López, was engaged in full-time missionary work among the Xumanas then roaming the plains of west-central Texas along the upper waters of the Red and Colorado Rivers. It was undoubtedly this group of Xumanas that claimed to have been miraculously instructed in Christian doctrine by the young and beautiful woman mentioned below by Benavides. Cf. Frederick W. Hodge, "The Jumano Indians," *Proceedings, American Anthropological Society*, N.S., XX (1910), 249-268; Herbert E. Bolton, "The Jumano Indians in Texas, 1650-1771," *Texas State Historical Association Quarterly*, XV (1911), 66-84; and France V. Scholes and Harry P. Mera, "Some Aspects of the Jumano Problem," *Contributions to American Anthropology and History* ("Carnegie Institution Publications," No. 523 [Washington, 1940], 265-299).

<sup>122</sup> This reference is probably to the Manzano Salines of the Estancia Valley in Torrance County. The salt pools and salt marshes located there constituted the principal source of salt for the Rio Grande Pueblos (Forrest, *op. cit.*, I, 141-142).